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MORAL DILEMMAS IN THE CHILD NOVEL

By

© PATRICK VERRIOUR

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

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FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled "Moral Dilemmas in the Child Novel" submitted by Patrick Verriour in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education.

ABSTRACT

This study of the moral dilemmas in the child novel was primarily concerned with investigating ways in which non-didactic, contemporary children's fiction could be used in a grade six or seven literature program. In contrast to studies which have attempted to demonstrate how fiction can instil conventional moral values, it was proposed in this investigation that the moral dilemmas present in contemporary children's fiction could be utilized to increase the child's understanding of literature by challenging him to make independent, moral decisions.

In order to determine the presence of moral dilemmas in a representative sample of contemporary children's fiction, Kohlberg's scale of moral development was selected as the criterion for the evaluation of the moral dilemma and the response of the main characters to that dilemma. All novels deemed suitable for children aged 11 to 14, and which had been reviewed in four leading periodical selection aids between January, 1970 and December, 1975, were considered for the study. Each book had to meet the study's definition of child novel, and final selection was based on overall literary merit, unconventional handling of theme and the presence of conflict situations in the plot. The four books eventually selected all portrayed children faced with the problem of stealing.

Each book was analyzed according to the following format: a plot summary, a literary appraisal and the extraction of those incidents which contained moral dilemmas. For each moral dilemma identified, the moral reasoning of the main child character was classified according to Kohlberg's stages of moral development.

The findings for each book were tabulated and considered separately, as well as in comparison with the other books examined. The study revealed that it was possible to use the Kohlberg instrument for the identification of moral dilemmas, and for the classification of the moral reasoning of the main characters within each of the four novels. Furthermore, it was found that the method of content analysis used in this study could be of value to teachers in evaluating the suitability of child novels for the discussion of moral problems in a classroom literature program.

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CHAPTER I

THE NATURE OF THE STUDY

One of the unfortunate features of children's literature during the past two centuries has been the role it has frequently assumed in the transmission of adult social and moral values. This has been perpetuated in books which either were unashamedly didactic in tone and theme or so terrifying they were intended to shock the child into social conformity. Paradoxically others have been so bland that the child reader received little intellectual challenge or felt any genuine moral discomfiture. Both children's writers and adults charged with the responsibility of introducing books to children have been responsible for the lack-lustre quality of much of children's literature.

Indeed, Avery (1975) went so far as to say that except for a small handful, children's books did not deserve to be called literature in the literary sense although they did mirror constantly shifting moral patterns of the day, answering such questions as:

> What in any given age do adults want of children ?What are their values? What are the virtues they are striving to inculcate, the vices they are trying to tread down?Do they rate learning above godliness, truthtelling above obedience; do they encourage or suppress imagination?(p. 9)

Avery's study ended with books published in I950 and therefore did not fully consider the phenomenal increase in the number of children's novels which purport to realistically portray the problems faced by young children growing up in contemporary society.

Commenting on this current vogue of 'realistic fiction', Karl (I97I) stated:

> Realism - facing today's problems in books - is not simply presenting what the reader already knows to be true, or wishes were true. It is not creating a facade that looks like something the reader knows to be true or modern, when a close examination reveals the facade to be a stage-set that simply gives a new look to an old sham act. Realism must have its roots in the actual concerns, the gut truths of what is - a far different thing from using today's scene as a backdrop for an old idea. (p. 2)

Although many of these novels have slipped into a new form of didacticism by portraying the worst excesses of modern social ills and offering conventional adult solutions to moral problems, some have touched on the complexities of human relationships, sensitively depicting individual children or adults faced by important personal problems.

Occasionally the writers of children's books have abandoned the 'closed' form of fiction in which the plot ends with the resolution of a conflict or problem and instead have favored an 'open' form of novel which is described by

Kalinsky (I974) as one which:

> does not conclude with definite resolutions but instead offers ... readers what are often highly ambiguous references to the continuing experience of the protagonists beyond the final pages of the novel. (p. 226)

These new trends in literary theme, form and style offer an exciting new challenge to elementary schools. In the past few teachers have considered children's literature as suitable for use in the classroom curriculum beyond time set aside for recreational reading.

The familiar argument for not using children's literature as a means of instruction is that there is a danger that children will be subjected to lessons of stringent literary analysis which would stifle rather than encourage reading. However, a literature program which adopts a humanistic approach in which the problems posed by plot situations are discussed in the light of the children's own experiences and reasoning abilities should enhance their appreciation of literature.

In advocating such an approach to the reading of literature, Rosenheim (1969) claimed:

> The realm of the humanist is the realm of what has been created by human wisdom and imagination, work that has achieved final form, work that waits to be known and savored and remembered for the unique

> satisfaction it provides. And so it is that a belief in the value of reading leads to a concern, not primarily for what is desirable or appropriate, what is suitable or profitable, what is hard or easy, what can be or ought to be, but for what is here - here to be encountered, here to be understood, here to be responded to, here to be rejoiced in. (p. 32)

Statement of the Problem

Research studies which have investigated moral values in children's literature have tended to concentrate on those books which could be used to shape a child's moral behavior in accordance with the expectations of adult society. This type of research has persisted despite the fact that there has been little evidence to show that reading these stories has had a direct effect on the moral conduct of children. In addition, literary history has shown both in England and America that didactic books have been the most ephemeral and least popular of children's books, except in the case of a rare few such as Little Women.

There is an increasing number of 'child novels' which portray many different types of individual children faced by complex moral problems, thus posing questions for the reader rather than providing 'pat' answers. These stories do not shirk their literary responsibility in depicting both the strengths and weaknesses of the child or adult characters.

Indeed, perhaps their most significant achievement has been to replace the stereotyped figures with ones whose moral attitudes more faithfully reflect those to which the child reader is exposed or which he might experience at some future date.

Such a valuable new form of children's literature could provide the teacher with excellent points of discussion and debate within the context of a literature program for grade six children. In the past, by identifying with a literary hero, the child reader has been emotionally rewarded by the author with the hero's final triumph over seemingly impossible odds. Today's hero is more vulnerable and consequently appears quite unpredictable in his reactions; in some cases he has become an anti - hero whose thoughts and actions might intellectually disturb the reader. A number of writers have urged teachers of literature to concern themselves more with the discussion of human relations in fiction, but others have seen this as a threat to the development of literary taste. However, the modern 'child novel' is not only for children, it is about children and if it succeeds at all as a literary work it does so because the children within the story appear to behave and develop according to the theories of those who have made close studies of children - the child psychologists.

The investigator has noted that the moral dilemmas

presented in many 'child novels', as well as the moral reasoning and development exhibited by the protagonists seem to reflect the findings of those developmental psychologists concerned with moral development, specifically Lawrence Kohlberg and his co-workers.

In applying their work in this field to the classroom situation, Kohlberg and Turiel (1971) maintained that teachers have constantly acted as moral educators, telling children what to do, making evaluations of children's behavior and directing children's relations with each other in the classroom. This conscious or unconscious method of moral education has been closely paralleled by those school librarians and teachers whose selection and use of children's literature has been influenced by the moral values they perceive within the stories.

In recommending that children should encounter genuine dilemmas which cannot be resolved by merely reciting slogans or 'virtue' words, Kohlberg and Turiel stressed the fact that their evidence showed principles of moral reasoning could not be taught directly, and that children employed thinking that was self-generated and changed only gradually.

Similarly many researchers who have investigated the moral effects of literature share the view of Holland (1968):

> Without experimental evidence, the best information

> we have suggests that we should make no claim of a long time moral effect for literature. At most, literature may open up for us some flexibility of mind so that growth from it and other experience remains possible. (p. 340)

Studies which have viewed children's literature as a means of directly shaping a child's moral conduct have emphasized the affective aspects of literature. This emphasis has diminished the stature of children's literature which could contribute to the development of a child's reasoning abilities through the discussion of moral issues and the complexities of human relationships.

Purposes of the Study

Although a few writers have alluded to the possibility of using the views of Kohlberg and his followers as a means of evaluating and using children's literature in the classroom, there has been a distinct lack of research in this area. Therefore this study is of an exploratory nature. Its primary purpose will be to examine the suitability of using Kohlberg's scale of moral development as a criterion for evaluating those 'child novels' which deal with moral issues and to develop a selection procedure for choosing appropriate novels as a basis for the classroom discussion of moral problems encountered in literature.

Based on this, the study will investigate the truth of the following hypotheses:

1. Moral dilemmas, comparable to those defined and described by Kohlberg, are present in some modern 'child novels'.

2. When confronted with a moral problem, literary characters within these works of fiction exhibit similar traits of moral reasoning to those described by Kohlberg in his stages of moral development.

3. The use of Kohlberg's philosophy as a means of evaluating the moral aspects of the 'child novel' will enable teachers to plan literature lessons based on the discussion of moral dilemmas within the narrative.

Definitions

As a great deal of reference will be made to the following terms, for the purpose of this study they are defined as follows:

Moral dilemmas:- moral problems which create a conflict situation in the mind as they cannot be resolved through the application of conventional value concepts, but which stimulate the individual to higher levels of moral reasoning.

Moral reasoning:- a process of solving moral problems by employing general principles. Ability in moral reasoning is dependent on the cognitive level of the individual.

Moral judgement:- judgement as to the rightness or wrongness

of an act or of conduct.

Moral development:- the progressive movement through which individuals learn to view conflicts not only from their point of view, but from a variety of perspectives using some basic principles as their criteria.

The modern 'child novel':-this term is applied to books containing child characters who live in a contemporary setting and who are faced with critical problems of self identity as they experience the process of growing up and adapting to the world around them.

Moral didacticism :- the explicit teaching of moral values.

Assumptions

The study recognises:

(a) The existence of a response to literature which Purves (1971) described as:

> the private, inarticulate, cognitive, psychomotor response to a work of literature which precedes any expression of that response. (p.703)

(b) The need to provide literature for children which will meet their developmental needs in a non-didactic manner, and simultaneously give pleasure and develop critical

faculties.

(c) The need to structure literary experiences for children taking into consideration that their thinking processes are qualitatively different to those of adults.

Design of the Study

The study will take the following form:

1. As this study seeks to explore ways in which the modern child novel could be used as a basis of discussion about moral problems, thus stimulating the child to a higher level of moral reasoning and encouraging him to make moral judgements, the large body of research and many references to literature's power to affect moral behaviour are important to the study. Chapter two will present an overview of the related literature and research arranged under five headings:

a) The moral effects of literature on the child - the classical view.

b) The moral effects of literature on the child - the contemporary view

c) The modern child novel

d) The humanistic approach to the teaching of literature

e) The basic tenets of Kohlberg's philosophy of moral development and their implications for literature programs

2. In order to determine the presence of moral dilemmas within the modern child novel , four books have been selected for examination from those recommended by the Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books, Booklist, the School Library Journal and Horn Book Magazine. All books suitable for the eleven to fourteen year age range were considered and the final selection made on the basis of the following criteria;

a) Overall literary merit

b) Unconventional handling of the theme

c) Presence of a conflict situation in the book which forced the main character or characters to make a moral judgement and exhibit moral reasoning

d) Extent to which each novel met the study's definition of the modern child novel.

During the period 1970 to 1975, the aforementioned periodicals reviewed a total of 211 books which could be described as child novels suitable for use with students from grade five to grade eight, although the journals were not in total agreement as to their age or grade recommendations.

The four books finally chosen for the purposes of this study were:

1. The Mimosa Tree by Vera and Bill Cleaver

2. Then Again Maybe I Won't by Judy Blume

3. Takers and Returners by Carol Beach York

4. A Hero Ain't Nothin' But A Sandwich by Alice Childress

All of these books could be used with a mature grade six or grade seven class, although teachers would have to review the final book carefully to ascertain whether children at this age level would be able to handle the themes dealt with.

Each book, to a greater or lesser degree, handles the problem of stealing, although it must be stressed that this is only one aspect of the plot.

Researchers have shown a tendency to concentrate their studies on only those works which have received the Newbery Award. None of the above books has won this award although the last named novel was an A.L.A. notable book of the year.

3. In chapter three a short summary of each book will be given with an overall literary evaluation of its plot, theme, style, tone and characterization in order to determine the quality of the work.

Incidents which portray the level of moral development of the main child character will be extracted and classified according to Kohlberg's stages of moral development.

An examination will be made of the moral dilemmas

confronting the child and of the moral judgements and moral reasoning exhibited by the character involved.

4. Data from the content analysis will be tabulated and discussed in Chapter IV followed by a synthesis of the findings in the last chapter. Should the content analysis reveal the presence of genuine moral dilemmas, as well as examples of moral development and moral reasoning in the main character of each child novel, suggestions will be given to teachers as to how they might use the methods of this investigstion to identify moral problems in similar works of fiction. In addition the study will examine the possibilities of using the child novel as a basis for the discussion of moral dilemmas within the elementary school literature program.

Limitations of the Study

The author acknowledges that Kohlberg's studies of moral development represent only one perspective of cognitive psychology's work in this field. Furthermore, the use of the Kohlberg scale in measuring moral development is subject to the investigator's individual interpretation.

The choice of the four books to be examined for the purpose of this study represents only a small sample of the modern child novel, and the investigator has been able to

focus on only one conflict situation - stealing - although there are child novels dealing with many other moral problems, such as bullying, cheating and lying.

CHAPTER II

RELATED LITERATURE AND RESEARCH

The moral effects of literature and a writer's ability to portray human relations realistically have both been contentious issues since the days of Plato and Aristotle. In education, debate has been centered around an individual work's moral effect upon youth, so that too often the book's literary worth has been overlooked.

Those who consider imaginative literature as being a perfect reflection of human emotions and endeavors have stressed its value in shaping a person's behavior and attitudes through identification with a particular character in a book. Their opponents have argued that a literary work communicates its moral attitudes and views implicitly to the reader, not directly seeking to alter moral behavior but merely opening up the possibility of change.

This chapter will seek to summarize the literature and research surrounding the controversy regarding literature's supposed ability to shape the moral behavior of youth. First, the writing of Plato and Aristotle and modern commentators on their work will be discussed. Secondly, pertinent research and theories in the field of bibliotherapy will be examined to clarify its role

in the classroom setting. Thirdly, the modern trend of children's literature to more 'realism' has again raised charges of didacticism from certain critics as well as strong disapproval of the moral problems with which it deals. The work of writers who have made a study of these issues will be examined.

Fourthly, a number of educational writers have advocated a more humanistic approach to the teaching of literature, in which students would be given more opportunity to discuss human problems portrayed in fiction. Their ideas will be described along with those of a small number of educators who have suggested that the research findings of Lawrence Kohlberg could contribute to the use of children's literature within the classroom.

Finally, Kohlberg's educational philosophy and his work in the field of moral development will be outlined to show how his studies could provide a means of identifying the moral dilemmas within the child novel, thus opening up the possibility of stimulating literature programs for upper elementary school students.

The Moral Effects of Literature on the Child: the Classical View

When literature is judged by the moral values it expresses, the criteria which are being employed becomes a matter of crucial importance. In classical Greece, where poetry held a central place in education, Plato (1941) maintained that literature which

was "concerned with human life" (p. 79) might not portray it realistically and therefore would corrupt youth.

> I suspect we shall find both poets and prosewriters guilty of the most serious misstatements about human life making out that wrongdoers are often happy, and just men miserable, that injustice pays, if not detected and that my being just is to another's advantage but a loss to myself. (pp. 79-80)

For these reasons Plato proposed that in his ideal state poems and tales should be "prohibited" and others composed in the contrary sense.

Bate (1970) described Plato's theory of art as the tendency "to conceive art as essentially an imitation of objects or aspects of the material world, as therefore being of limited moral and educational value" (p. 42), thus maintaining Plato gave prominence not to the social influence of art but rather "to the philosophical questioning about the desirability of that influence" (p. 42).

In contrast and in partial reply to Plato's comments, Aristotle (1967) rejected the Platonic position that the study of poetry should be subordinate to moral and political education, although Aristotle did concede in his Politics (1959) that some forms of poetry exercised a dangerous influence on youth. However, in the Poetics, Aristotle took the position of literary critic, as opposed to that of social reformer, abandoning the didactic point of view.

As Butcher (1951) stressed:

> Aristotle's critical judgements in poetry rest on aesthetic and logical grounds, they take no account of ethical aims or tendencies. (p. 225)

Adler (1965) considered the Platonic question of whether art has any place, from the moral viewpoint, in the well-ordered state, and concluded Aristotle had provided the answer by stating that there were two human needs which poetry served to satisfy. The first of these needs was emotional and the second contemplative. Adler drew a clear distinction between the two needs when he stated:

> To the extent that works of art are objects of contemplation and satisfy the desire to learn they are educative, but this is intellectual education and not moral training ... The distinction between intellectual and moral education can be made in terms of their ends: the cultivation of the intellectual virtues on the one hand and the moral virtues on the other. (p. 29)

Adler felt the catharthis or 'purging' of the passions described by Aristotle might contribute to the conduct of a good life, but similar to the question of whether the arts actually corrupted or cultivated moral values he maintained that:

> If they do so it is an accidental and not a proper consequence of their nature. The extent to which a particular work of art succeeds in purging the emotions it arouses ... is a question of fact which cannot be answered by an analysis of the nature of art. (p. 29)

Despite the fact that Aristotle (1967) clearly adhered to literary criteria for the assessment of poetry's effect upon its audience, Bate (1970) considered Aristotle's belief in the formative and morally desirable effects of art was implicit in his writings, and quite in accordance with the general Greek attitude; Bate saw Plato as being the writer who had adopted the atypical position.

Summary

Although Plato voiced a concern which still persists to-day regarding literature's possible harmful effects upon youth and the need to provide literature which would have a positive influence, the stance adopted by Aristotle on the poet's literary and moral integrity has indicated that literature should not be subjected to the dictates of the state.

Moreover, according to Adler, literature can meet the intellectual and emotional needs of man, indirectly helping him develop both intellectually and spiritually.

The Moral Effects of Literature on the Child: the Contemporary View

The term 'bibliotherapy' has been loosely applied to a number of methods employed to influence a person's behavior through the reading of books. In educational institutions it has sometimes referred

to large class situations where the teacher used literature in an attempt to inculcate a specific value such as honesty or to discourage phobias and unacceptable social behavior. Bibliotherapy has also been employed in the hope of helping an individual child deal with a specific personal problem .

Brown (1975) stated that the theory of bibliotherapy was founded on the Greek faith in the healing value of reading, and on imaginative literature's ability to reflect moral goodness. However, modern bibliotherapy's scientific pretensions bear little resemblance to the views expressed in ancient Greece.

Bibliotherapy, as its name implies, has focused specifically on the reader's identification with a real or fictional character with a resulting cathartic effect, that is, a release of tension or emotion. Zaccaria and Moses (1968) reported that in the next stage the individual began to work through his problem, thus achieving a degree of insight into the problem and his resulting behavior. Implicitly then the reader could use the acquired insight to solve other problems through generalization and transfer of learning.

Russell and Shrodes (1950) believed that bibliotherapy treatment was based on:

> The process of dynamic interaction between the personality of the reader and literature - interaction which may be utilized for personality, adjustment and growth. (p. 335)

In the opinion of Russell and Shrodes, bibliotherapy lies within the province of every teacher of literature, and teachers should be aware that through literature children can be helped to solve developmental problems, as well as being assisted in their personal adjustment to life.

Zaccaria and Moses (1968) emphasized the place of bibliotherapy in the following philosophies of education:

> 1. Education of life adjustment: giving youth attitudes and skills to cope with situations (problems) of everyday life.
> 2. Education for psychological maturity: helping develop attitudes of self-understanding and self-acceptance.
> 3. Education for moral character development: teaching individuals the right thing to do; emphasis on honesty, truthfulness and industry. (p. 4)

Brown reiterated these three goals of education and also stated:

> In the teaching of moral principles evidence shows that students do not respond as well to direct efforts as to indirect, more subtle methods. (p. 182)

As stated earlier, bibliotherapy has been founded on the belief that after insight has been gained by the reader a transfer will take place from the problems faced in books to those encountered by the individual in everyday life. Although this may have been true for individuals, the evidence showing transfer has taken place when bibliotherapy has been practised in class-rooms has been termed by Newell (1965) as "discouraging". Kircher (1952) supported the use of bibliotherapy in schools, so that individual children could gain emotional relief from problems

and glean principles of conduct which would enable them to better manage themselves. However, she added the following qualification:

> We must not delude ourselves with the idea that once a moral principle gains entrance to the mind of the child it ... determines conduct. I have been deeply interested in observing a child acquire a good moral principle, see its beauty and recognise its validity, but refuse to apply it to his own personal problems. (p.6)

Bibliotherapy's failure to directly alter a group of children's classroom behavior was substantially borne out by Livengood (1961), who used bibliotherapeutic treatment to improve peer relations within a sixth grade classroom, where students were forming cliques and there was a high proportion of isolates. Livengood read 36 literary selections to the class, and in each case asked the students to identify the moral of the story. At the conclusion of the treatment a worse social climate existed within the classroom than before, and she concluded that bibliotherapy appeared to be an arbitrary method of solving personal problems. The poor results of Livengood's study could have been due to the fact there was a lack of oral discussion accompanying the reading of the stories.

Bovyar (1962) used tales about sportsmanship in order to study the growth of this concept in upper elementary school children. In his attempts to isolate story content as the influencing

factor, Bovyar reported that the single reading of the stories had little or no effect upon the specific categories of the definition 'sportsmanship' that were mentioned by his subjects. He recommended that future studies should include class discussions, as "the forces of literature are brought out more strongly under teacher guidance and discussion"(p. 765).

Even studies of a more intensive nature such as the one carried out by the Materials Center, University of Chicago, which has been described by Brooks (1949), have concluded that the effects of stories with developmental values, such as honesty and courage, are:

> Of a contributory sort just as the everyday experiences of living and socializing <u>contribute to</u> rather than produce growth and development. The vicarious experiences derived from reading are merely part of an overall pattern of forces. (p. 55)

Brooks also emphasized that the actual identification of developmental values in children's literature was carried out by adults who are removed from children and who:

> Play a conscious part either in (children's) selection of what they read or in their post reading discussions. (p. 49)

The choice of suitable literature to be used for shaping a child's moral conduct has depended not only on the perceived needs of the child but also on the developmental values which

the teacher or therapist has wished to encourage.

Zaccaria and Moses (1968) distinguished between the didactic textbook which focuses on informational topics, such as adjustment, marriage and taking drugs, and which gives the individual an intellectual understanding of his environment, as opposed to imaginative literature, such as novels, poetry and plays. Those writers who have favored imaginative literature for use in bibliotherapy have advocated an indirect approach in the presentation of acceptable human values. However, there has been disagreement over whether these books should also meet the standards of good literature.

Although Cianciolo (1965) supported the use of bibliotherapy, she did not recommend a return to didactic literature. Instead, she suggested that books which were used to change an attitude or help children in their understanding of other people should also exemplify the best qualities of literature, depicting characters which were lifelike and complete.

Despite the good intentions of some bibliotherapists that readers should always be guided to books which meet high standards of literary quality, there has been a tendency by many to ignore this aspect and categorize works under specific developmental values. In selecting books for bibliotherapy Perry (1972) recommended that poor quality books should be considered as

place holders until better ones on the subject became available.

A large number of studies have been performed to examine the suitability of using children's fiction for moral character development. Up to 1970, the psychological instrument used by most researchers to measure the developmental values within stories was the hierarchy of developmental tasks developed by Havinghurst (1953). He contended that an individual must learn certain developmental tasks in order to experience healthy and satisfactory growth.

Witty (1964) employed this method in his work at the North Western University Psychological-Educational clinic, and explained that:

> After a child has been carefully studied, reading experiences are frequently recommended in accord with derived needs or developmental needs as differentiated from basic human needs. (p. 452)

McGuire (1958) used Havinghurst's developmental tasks to elicit responses from writers, teachers and children regarding the developmental values they deemed were important in children's literature. She recommended that adults who were concerned with the teaching and guidance of children's reading should appraise books in terms of the

developmental values expressed in stories, so that the values in the books chosen corresponded to the adjustment tasks being faced by young people.

Cianciolo (1964) demonstrated that children's books have reflected the American style of living and she classified books under headings such as "Respect of Truth", "Rule of Law"; "Individuality", "Contributes to the Welfare of the Group" and "Children have a Well-Established Place". She concluded that children's books have reflected the American way of life and have helped promulgate "values peculiar to the democratic way of living." (p. 776).

Some writers have seen children's literature as having an adverse effect on children, when the aforenamed values are neglected. Holmze (1966) surveyed interpersonal relations as presented in children's books for the 40 year period up to 1960. She found that realistic fiction tended to depict a child's world in which adult characters were given decreasing importance. Holmze saw these books as exacerbating problems between children and adults and she recommended that writers should portray wiser and more mature adults in their stories.

The preoccupation by critics of children's books with

moral values was noted by Townsend (1969), who felt that even the most eminent of authorities, such as May Hill Arbuthnot and Charlotte S.Huck, were overly concerned with this aspect of children's literature.

Summary

There has been little evidence to show that bibliotherapy practised within the classroom setting has had any measurable success in changing the conduct of children. However, some writers concerned with evaluating children's literature appear to have assumed that literature does wield an important influence over the manner in which children acquire society's values. A number of these writers have implied or openly suggested that children's books should be assessed in terms of the moral values which are adhered to, thus ignoring those books of high literary quality which challenge society's values and which might stimulate the child to reflect on his own moral position.

The Modern Child Novel

Writers and critics of children's books who view children's literature from a literary standpoint have welcomed the fact that many recent novels have questioned

rather than upheld the traditional values of American society.

Townsend (1974) wrote:

> The one pleasant result of the disappearance of old assumptions about the infallibility of parents and the duty of children to toe the line has been the arrival of a number of highly idiosyncratic child characters ... whose personalities have been allowed by their authors to develop without too much regard for what constitutes a proper example. (p. 277)

Zolotow (1972) claimed there had been a transition from books which reinforced the discrepencies between what was taught as right, and what actually existed in the world, to ones which have been more intellectually honest. She went on to say that modern child novels have dealt with:

> honest situations with no dishonest solutions, questions, tentative answers, possible hopes, sometimes despair, but no morally dishonest endings that are untrue artistically as well as in human terms. (p. 46)

However, the trend to more 'honest' books has led to a great deal of misunderstanding by adults. Fenwick (1968) stated that many of the new 'realistic' books have been controversial in that "they are recognised to be well-written but have appealed in quite different degrees to adults and children" (p. 41).

Fenwick cited the example of Louise Fitzhugh's Harriet The Spy, which has been popular with girls in grades five and six, but which, because of Harriet's spying on her parents and neighbours often made adults uneasy as they interpreted this

as a violation of privacy.

Cullinan (1974) has discussed the problem which has arisen because some adults, who once complained about the lack of reality in children's books, are now horrified by the way in which social and moral problems are starkly and candidly reflected in children's literature. She argued that too often these adults are more concerned with the type of literature children are reading rather than appreciating the positive impact a particular book might have on a child. Cullinan believed that only books of high literary merit could interest children in reading so there should be no compromise over quality in the new 'realism'.

At this point it is important to distinguish between books which appear to have been written on issues which adults deem as important as opposed to those which truly reflect problems faced by children. Stanek (1975) studied a large number of adolescent novels, and concluded that many of the books were preoccupied with adult social concerns and that the treatment was extremely didactic. However, she welcomed the experimentation in style in these books, such as first-person narrative and the multi-character point of view, the stream-of-consciousness narration and the use of non-standard English. The books which appealed most to the teenagers, with whom

Stanek carried out her study, dealt with family, school or personal matters.

Stanek found out that high on the list of young people's favorite books was Scott O'Dell's Island of the Blue Dolphins. Wald (1975) used this book to explore the significant elements of the fiction of 'realism' and concluded that:

> Realism depicting what is possible and plausible in life, reacts to the lack of plot in life and therefore does not concentrate on symmetry and plot. Instead the writer of realism focuses on the individual in the narrative. It follows then, that the essence of good realistic fiction derives from the characterization rather than the plot. (p. 940)

Wald thought the primary concern of the writer was with the actions and motivations of the character and his growth as he changed and grew as a result of events.

These views are corroborated by the interpretive analysis conducted by Hayden (1969) of selected Newbery Award books. She examined the personal development of the main child character as he or she interacted with the immediate social environment, and found that when the main character was confronted with a problem which involved discomfort to the individual and those around him, successful resolution of the problem enabled the character to develop greater control over subsequent behavior.

In his recent study of the history of Australian children's fiction, Saxby (1971) noted the emergence of the child novel, which concentrated on the problems of human nature or behavior,

in contrast to the more traditional Australian adventure or family story. He defined these new books as ones which were concerned with events within a child's actual or imagined experience and concluded that although no novel could escape touching on the complications of man's existence, within the past 20 years these complications had begun to control the action.

Perhaps the essential difference between the modern child novel and the stories they have replaced hinges on the fact that the complexities of life are now dealt with more prominently in children's books. As McDowall (1973) stressed, an important ingredient of the more complex child novel has been the possibility of growth which it offers the hero. McDowall agreed with Tucker (1972) who maintained that if the main character emerged substantially the same as he began in the book, the story had very little to offer the child reader. Tucker did not favor writers staying at one level of a child's thinking, but felt they should raise readers from their habitual ways of thinking and suggest new avenues to them.

Both of these writers stated that it is poor literary technique to show just one dimension of character. They also declared there has to be a measure of uncertainty in the reader's response to a character. According to McDowall, books which

did not foster this idea of growth and uncertainty demanded only an emotional response, as opposed to one requiring intellect and judgement.

Summary

A consensus of opinion seems to exist among literary authorities that the modern child novel differs from previous children's fiction in seeking a more honest and accurate portrayal of the problems, attitudes and development of children. These books have focused more on the child character's reactions to a crisis situation, offering the reader opportunities to think about the problem and to pass judgement on the character's resulting thoughts and actions.

The Humanistic Approach to the Teaching of Literature

McDowall and Tucker compared the moral growth of literary characters, and the problem situations they encountered in children's stories, to the findings and theories of psychologists Jean Piaget and Lawrence Kohlberg. Indeed, a few writers have advocated the use of cognitive psychology's perspective of moral development as a major criterion in the evaluation of children's literature.

The foregoing practice appears justified in view of the many studies which have called for more emphasis on the

humanistic approach to the teaching of literature. Rosenblatt (1938) stated that teachers of literature had deliberately failed to consider human concerns during literature periods, because they were afraid that the periods would degenerate into the use of books in order to illustrate moral points or to make generalizations about social problems.

However Rosenblatt has maintained that the teacher is always dealing with human relations, and that for the reader, the human values and the human experience presented in literature are far more important than the formal elements of style and structure.

Loban (1961) went so far as to claim that literature cannot be taught apart from the morality of humanity, and that literature has the power to illuminate choices from among moral values. However, he warned that literature should not be used for immediate practical results in improving values; it was not a 'poultice' to be applied to weaknesses in moral perception. Instead, literature could disclose to the reader wider and deeper perceptions and organizations of experience.

Although the identification and clarification of values has often been thought to lie more within the jurisdiction of social studies than literature, Cox (1974) recommended the study of values in literature without any deemphasis of the traditional literary approach. She felt that by helping children identify

the value conflicts in stories they would develop an increasing awareness of issues existing in our society. In addition, they would come to realize that people hold different viewpoints, and that consideration of values can reveal those conflicts which hinder a person in effective decision making.

Lundsteen (1972) advocated the limited use of bibliotherapy in the language arts program as a problem solving device in the discussion of moral issues.By adapting bibliotherapy for this purpose she was able to present a more balanced type of literature program.

Two investigators who are at present studying the suitability of Kohlberg's theories of moral development for the evaluation and use of children's books in the classroom, appear to have shifted the emphasis of their work from literature to a program of moral development. Biskin and Hoskisson (1974) have recommended that books be categorized under headings such as "Obligation" and "Responsibility", terms which they claimed were especially suited to Kohlberg's theories.

Edwards (1975) has stated that she believes Kohlberg's stages of moral development can be used in conjunction with literature in order to influence the moral growth of children. Despite the fact she thought there should be a match between the literary and moral levels of the books, Edwards inclined

to the view that it may be necessary for teachers to alter those books which depict a low level of moral reasoning by the characters, a procedure which the investigator believes would be unacceptable to most teachers. Tucker (1972), unlike Edwards, maintains that the criteria for high literary quality depends on believable moral growth of the characters as much as the more formal literary elements.

Summary

Despite the fact that many writers have recognised that students should discuss moral issues which are found in literature, no clear method of how this should be accomplished has emerged. Possibly teachers fear that the teaching of literature could become lessons in moral instruction. However, there seems to be a growing interest among some writers in the work of Lawrence Kohlberg, which might provide one means of identifying the moral dilemmas facing characters within works of fiction, thus laying the basis for positive dicussion about moral problems in literature.

The Basic Tenets of Kohlberg's Philosophy of Moral Development and Their Implications for Literature Programs

Although Kohlberg has not specifically mentioned literature in conjunction with his work in moral development, when in

1972 he and Mayer described how cognitive psychology formed an integral part of progressive education, they touched on an area of major importance to the teaching of literature.

Kohlberg and Mayer distinguished the progressive school of educational thought from the cultural transmission school by emphasizing that although both were concerned with education's responsibility for the students' moral growth, the progressives saw "the acquisition of morality as an active change in patterns of response to problematic situations" (p. 455) as opposed to the learning of culturally accepted rules by those who saw education's role as the transmission of culture. These writers also maintained that progessive education stressed the essential links between cognitive development and moral development so that "the development of logical and critical thought - central to cognitive education - found its larger meaning in a broad set of moral values" (p. 455).

In the same way that Kohlberg and Mayer have shown that education has been divided over the correct procedure for encouraging moral ideals, so too have teachers of literature been faced with devising an acceptable method for handling moral issues found in many works of literature. Reporting on James Miller's seminar entitled Literature and Values given at the 1966 Dartmouth Conference on the Teaching of English,

Muller (1967) commented that because literary works embodied a vision of life, a system of values or a moral dimension, they called on the reader to employ his moral imagination. When confronted with moral issues in literature, the teacher either tended to treat the moral dimension as if it were the sole end of literature, offering it to students as the absolute truth, or he totally ignored it, so as to avoid the difficulty and concentrated on the aesthetic experience. Muller concluded that both approaches impoverished literature and were likely to bore the student.

The dangers of literature's complete adherence to the cultural transmission school, where it is viewed as one means of preserving a cultural heritage, have resulted in radical changes in literature education particularly at the secondary school level. Purves (1971) reported that the subject was now dominated by the training of critical faculties, although these aims were still modified by the influences of progressive education, which Purves equated with the use of literature for life adjustment. Thus Purves maintained that a program which sought to secure attitudinal change through literature was not comparable to one which aimed to increase the students' analytic and interpretive skills.

However, Kohlberg and Mayer have made it clear that they believe the goal of progressive education is to provide an

educational environment in which children's active thinking is stimulated by the problematic, and by cognitive thinking, through their encounter with resolvable but genuine problems or conflicts. Correspondingly Kohlberg and Turiel (1971) defined the aim of moral education as stimulating children to move to higher stages in their moral development, rather than indoctrination into the fixed conventions of school, church or nation. To facilitate the child's movement to the next stage these writers suggested the presentation of a moral dilemma which would arouse genuine moral conflict within the child's mind, and which could not be answered with conventional 'right' answers.

Although Kohlberg's work has been thought of specifically in terms of moral education, it can be applied to any area of education where moral issues are present. However, Kohlberg (1966) stressed that these issues had to be challenging to the student in contrast to "the pat little stories in school readers where virtue always triumphed and in which everyone was really nice" (p. 23). Kohlberg concluded that the only way a child would attend to moral matters in the classroom was if he felt a genuine sense of uncertainty as to the right answer to the situation in question.

Based on their earlier longitudinal and cross cultural studies of moral judgement and reasoning, in which subjects were

exposed to hypothetical moral dilemmas, Kohlberg and Turiel (1971) explained that moral development is largely a process of restructuring, in more adequate form, the tendencies of empathy (concern for the welfare of others) and of justice (concern for equality and reciprocity). In contrast to a system of moral education which emphasizes conformity to rules, Kohlberg (1964) defined moral maturity as the capacity to make decisions and judgements which were moral, that is, based on internal principles of respect for human life and justice, and to act in accordance with those decisions.

In addition, Kohlberg (1971) posited that there is a developmental pattern to moral reasoning whose sequence is best described in six stages. Each individual has to progress through the stages in sequence - none can be avoided although the age at which a person functions at any given stage could depend upon varying environmental conditions. Kohlberg emphasized that because one individual was at a different stage of moral development from another this was not due to a lack of information, but rather because there was a qualitative difference in the mode of response to the dilemma under consideration.

In describing moral development as a heirarchical process, Kohlberg maintained that moral judgement has a character-

istic form at a given stage, which runs parallel to intellectual judgement and reasoning at the corresponding stage. Thus, he said that each new stage of moral development entails a new set of logical operations not present at the previous level.

Kohlberg (1971) identified six stages of moral development, two stages occurring at three distinct levels: the pre-conventional, the conventional and the post-conventional. The six stages have been described by Kohlberg as follows:

Pre-Conventional Level

> At this level the child is responsive to cultural rules and labels of good and bad, right or wrong, but interprets these labels in terms of either the physical or the hedonistic consequences of action (punishment, reward, exchange of favors) or in terms of the physical power of those who enunciate the rules and labels. The level is divided into two stages:
>
> Stage 1
>
> The punishment and obedience orientation. The physical consequences of action determine its goodness or badness regardless of the human meaning or value of those consequences. Avoidance of punishment and unquestioning deference to power are valued in their own right, not in terms of respect for an underlying moral order supported by punishment and authority (the latter being stage 4).
>
> Stage 2
>
> The instrumental relativist orientation. Right action consists of that which instrumentally satisfies one's own needs and occasionally the needs of others. Human relations are viewed in terms of those of the marketplace. Elements of fairness, reciprocity, and equal sharing are present, but they are always interpreted in a physical or pragmatic way. Reciprocity is a matter of "you scratch my back and I'll scratch yours," not of loyalty, gratitude or justice.

Conventional Level

At this level, maintaining the expectations of the individual's family, group or nation is perceived as valuable in its own right, regardless of immediate and obvious consequences. The attitude is not only one of conformity to personal expectations and social order, but of loyalty to it, of actively maintaining, supporting, and justifying the order and of identifying with the persons or group involved in it. At this level there are two stages:

Stage 3

The interpersonal concordance of "good boy - nice girl" orientation. Good behavior is that which pleases or helps others and is approved by them. There is much conformity to stereotypical images of what is majority or natural behavior. Behavior is frequently judged by intention: "He means well" becomes important for the first time. One earns approval by being "nice".

Stage 4

The law and order orientation. There is orientation toward authority, fixed rules and the maintenance of the social order. Right behavior consists of doing one's duty, showing respect for authority and maintaining the given social order for its own sake.

Post-Conventional, Autonomous, or Principled Level

At this level, there is a clear effort to define moral values and principles which have validity and application apart from the authority of the groups or persons holding these principles and apart from the individual's own identification with these groups. This level has two stages:

Stage 5

The social-contract legalistic orientation. Generally with utilitarian overtones. Right action tends to be defined in terms of general individual rights and in terms of standards which have been critically examined and agreed upon by the whole society. There is a clear awareness of the relativism of personal values and opinions and a corresponding emphasis upon procedural rules for reaching concensus. Aside from what is constitutionally and democratically agreed upon, the right is a matter of personal values and opinions. The re-

sult is an emphasis upon the legal point of view, but with an emphasis upon the possibility of changing law in terms of rational considerations of social utility (rather than rigidly maintaining it in terms of Stage 4 law and order). Outside the legal realm, free agreement and contract is the binding element of obligation. This is the 'bfficial" morality of the American government and constitution.

Stage 6

The universal ethical principle orientation. Right is defined by the decision of conscience in accord with self-chosen ethical principles appealing to logical comprehensiveness, universality, and consistency. These principles are abstract and ethical (the golden rule, the categorical imperative) and are not concrete moral rules like the ten commandments. At heart, these are universal principles of justice, of the reciprocity and equality of the human rights, and of respect for the dignity of human beings as individual persons. (pp. 222 - 226)

From data gathered in cross cultural studies, Kohlberg and Turiel (1971) noted that the stages of moral development are universal although the actual rate of development can vary from culture to culture. However, they emphasized that the stage three level of moral judgement was most used by boys aged thirteen irrespective of their country of origin.

Kohlberg (1971) saw moral judgement as a role taking process which gives the individual a chance to experience conflict between his own actions and evaluations and those of others within his social environment, especially his peers. In 1963, Kohlberg wrote that by role taking the attitudes of others, the concepts of rules are transformed from external principles to internal ones. Turiel (1969) noted that change came in children

when there were perceived contradictions, so that they were forced to explore a higher mode of thought. A year later he reported that he had found children could assimilate adult moral reasoning one level above their own, and could function here more easily than at two levels above their level. This indicated that it was difficult for children to grasp rules conceived at a much higher level of reasoning. Turiel (1969) also reported that few people answered Kohlberg's moral dilemma situations at one specific stage of reasoning; whereas they tended to respond at one dominant level, they also used reasoning from levels above and below the dominant one.

Summary

Kohlberg has clearly identified his theories and philosophy of moral development with the aims of progressive education. Here the moral growth of the child has been seen as an intellectual experience in which the individual is stimulated to a higher form of moral reasoning when challenged by problems he cannot resolve by resorting to the more conventional moral rules of conduct.

Therefore, in order to stimulate moral development it has been suggested that children be confronted with moral dilemmas a stage above their own level of moral reasoning, which will force them to critically analyse their own response to

the given situation. Moreover, by role taking other people's attitudes in his interaction with the social environment, the child would be more likely to internalise moral principles upon which he may act at some later time.

The contemporary approach to the teaching of literature has favored the development of the reader's critical skills. As literary works touch on a wide variety of moral issues facing man, it would seem natural that Kohlberg's theories be used as a means of identifying moral dilemmas in literature, thus forcing the child to think critically about these problems. By being thus stimulated, the child's own perspective could change, especially as he considers the reasoning, judgement and actions of the literary characters and compares them with his own.

CHAPTER III

CONTENT ANALYSES OF SELECTED BOOKS

In this chapter, four contemporary child novels will be examined so that moral dilemmas facing the main child character in each book may be identified in short literary extracts. Each extract will be followed by an analysis of the moral reasoning displayed by the child character, which will be classified according to Kohlberg's stages of moral development described in the preceding chapter.

A summary of the book's plot will accompany each content analysis and where necessary, explanations will be given of those events in the story which will help to clarify the circumstances leading up to the moral dilemma. Each content analysis will also include a literary appraisal; the purpose of this will be to establish the overall quality of the books in their handling of plot, theme, style, tone and characterization.

Each of the four novels used for the purpose of this study was recommended for children aged 11 to 14 years by four leading periodical selection aids: the Bulletin of the

Center for Children's Books, Booklist, School Library Journal, and Horn Book Magazine.

The Mimosa Tree by Vera and Bill Cleaver (1970)

Summary of the Plot

At the behest of their stepmother, Zollie, the Proffit family forsake their sparse piece of land and tar-papered shack at Goose Elk in the North Carolina hills, after neighbors have poisoned their hogs and blight has destroyed their crops. Their destination is Chicago, where Zollie has been promised a job and a small apartment, which will also have to house the family of five children and their blind father.

Although the children are at first dazzled by the luxuries of their new home, the harshness of city life and the tawdry neighborhood, in which they now live, soon alters their views and attitudes. Marvella, aged 14 and the oldest child in the family, immediately finds herself conjuring up imaginary scenes of trees and flowers to save her father from the shock of finding out how depressing their surroundings really are. Her 10 year old brother, Hugh, along with another younger brother, Arli, unconciously perform a petty larceny to help two new friends who are already habitual thieves. On the advice of Marvella,who is afraid of losing her job at a pawnbroker's, Hugh denies any knowledge of the crime to the police.

Soon the stepmother deserts them, thus depriving the family of a regular source of income. Coached by one of his friends, Hugh resorts to bag snatching and Marvella applies to the welfare office for relief. However, bureaucratic indifference to their plight and the loss of her 10 dollar a week job , because she is a minor, at last drives Marvella to follow Hugh's example of stealing from people on the streets.

Meanwhile, the family witnesses a murder in the alley below and a new friend and neighbor is arrested for drug traffick-ing. Soon after these incidents Hugh is present at the death of one of his two friends who has not been able to receive proper treatment for his epilepsy. When the other friend pushes his mother under a bus so that she is severely injured, Marvella is so shocked that she realizes the whole family must return to their home in the country. Marvella stifles her fear of driving and returns the family to North Carolina, where they are welcomed by their erstwhile enemies who inform them that a cure has been found for the blight which helped to drive them out. Emotionally overwhelmed, Marvella weeps for the plight of the people she has met in Chicago and for the misfortunes the family has had to suffer.

Literary Appraisal

Although three of the four periodicals consulted criticized this novel for its unlikely ending, the overwhelming tragedy of the family's flight from subsistence farming to city squalor and their subsequent return to what they now believe to be a pastoral haven makes their former neighbors' 'volte face' acceptable, although not entirely believable. However, this final compromise does not adversely affect the book's air of unremitting bleakness as the Proffit family reels from one disaster to another. Indeed, the pace at which events take place is breathtakingly fast as their entire stay in the city is packed into one, short, oppressive summer.

Images of death and decay reinforce the picture of gloom as the final hog dies, oily clouds blot out their tiny view of the sky above the buildings, and Hugh's sick friend expires in a pool of blood on a street sidewalk. The only symbol of life and hope left to the family is the imagined mimosa tree, whose existence in this northern city is an anachronism in itself and never really believed by their country-wise father.

Hardly a patriarchal figure, Doran Proffit exhibits a physical helplessness, not only in his blindness but also in the way he allows himself to be steered to Chicago where he succumbs to a life of total indolence. In contrast, his second wife's self-

motivated drive, tempered by a blowzy physical charm, momen-arily unites the family although she soon makes a well-planned exit from their lives.

Against this background the well-defined characters of Marvella and Hugh emerge. Marvella is the gawky 14 year old, who adheres to her father's 'golden rule' and who is driven by instinct to protect the family at all costs. Hugh is as gullible as his father but soon changes when he is forced to resort to steal-ing on the streets. The cocky brashness he quickly assumes is even more tragic than the mental anguishes suffered by his sister, who preserves an in-born country bred resilience to the problems of city life.

However,Marvella's chances of survival are slim in the face of the peculiar parade of characters to which she and the rest of the family are exposed. Apart from the tough street-wise Frank, who steals in order that his friend should receive proper medical treatment, there are the 'winos', the tricksters and the drug-peddlars. There are self-effacing welfare workers, large women sporting cheap jewellery and capacious purses and, above all, faceless crowds battling with each other for a place on the sidewalks. Although this vast array of characters could turn the book into a case study of social misfits, it is the loss of innocence by both Hugh and Marvella at the hands of many of these people

which becomes the real indictment of this grim and disturbing book.

Moral Dilemmas Faced by Marvella

A total of 10 moral dilemmas facing the main child character, Marvella, have been identified by the investigator in the novel The Mimosa Tree. Each of these dilemmas will be analysed according to Kohlberg's stages of moral development which were outlined in the preceding chapter. The moral dilemmas are as follows:

> (i) Beneath the frosty fringes of his hair Dorman Proffit's milky eyes yearned. "If only your mama was alive to say we was doin' the right thing. Zolly's good. I know she means good. A man could'nt ask for a better wife or better mother to his young-uns. But it ain't the same. I hear her say we got to go and I know more'n likely it's the truth but it jest don't sink in."With his clenched fist he beat on the sty railing.
>
> Flies had been attracted to the dead hog. Tumbling and buzzing they began to settle down on to the body of it. Marvella turned her head and cautiously looked into the face of her father. It was too old for its actual age. The mountain air which, according to flatlanders, toned and glowed complexions, hadn't done a favorable thing for his. Leathered by wind and sun it was brown and permanently creased. Only the blurred eyes with the milky veil over them remained curiously young. The eyes lent an innocent look to his face.
>
> He's the father of me and all the four little kids, thought Marvella, and still he doesn't see what's best for us. Why is that? (pp. 8 - 9)

Marvella has accepted the move to Chicago as being of benefit to the whole family. Around her she can see the end of

any hope of livelihood on the farm but her father is still reluctant to go. She expects him to do what is best for his family and cannot understand his continued attachment to the land.

Marvella may appear harsh and insensitive to her father's feelings but she is at the conventional level of moral reasoning where at the fourth of Kohlberg's stages there is an emphasis on doing one's duty.

> (ii) "Tell me," said her father, "what's outside the window. Look and tell me what's out there." (p. 13)
>
> He wants there to be trees and birds and flowers out there, she thought. Like at home. It'll kill him if I say there's just trash and mess. It'd just about kill him. He'd want to go back home and we can't do that. The car wouldn't make it and besides there's nothing to go back for. He's a country man - all of us are country people - but the country drove us out. Now we're in the city where we can make money and not have to worry about the Critchers poisoning our hogs and the blight killing our crops and the snow coming six feet deep in the wintertime. This is a nice place. All the pink makes me a little sick to my stomach but I'll get used to it. The little kids have got their inside toilet and there's the television and tomorrow I'm going to get me a job. I can be a maid. Maybe not in Juanita's hotel but I can get to be one if I try. All you have to do is to say, "Yes, ma'am," and "No ma'am," and know how to clean. I'm smart. I learn fast. Everybody says so. And I'm not afraid of things. Even Zollie has to say that about me. So we've got to stay here for awhile Until we can see our way clearer than we can now. So I've got to say to him there are trees and birds and flowers out there. (p. 14)

The main reason for not describing the real scene to her father is not because it would upset him but because Marvella

knows he would wish to leave the city and return home. Already her disillusionment with Goose Elk has been replaced with the hope of fresh prospects in Chicago. Here there are job opportunities and as long as she does her work correctly and willingly there will be little trouble in adapting to her new life.

Again Marvella is reasoning at the stage four level in displaying respect for authority and the social order although the statement regarding her role as a maid is at the stage three level where one earns approval by being "nice".

> (iii) ... "I'm trying to tell you what happened this morning. We was all out in the alley playing ball. Frank and Mario was there. And they told us about the gold piece, how old Mrs. Haliki got it away from them. They said they could get it back easy but they was too big to go through Mrs. Haliki's window. So I said let Arlie go. He's little. And so then we waited till everybody had gone off to work and then we lifted Arlie up and pushed him through the window, and he went in and got the gold piece and came back out again."
>
> Marvella had drawn back from her brother. She was staring at him. She too began to whisper. "Oh, Hugh. But that's ... that's stealing." (p. 36)

A pulse had begun to beat against Marvella's brain. This was bad business. The law wouldn't be like the law back in Goose Elk - one man just piddle-diddling with it when he got time. Instinct told her that. Instinct told her that here it would be serious. There wouldn't be any dawdling around with it - no threat for next time. The law back in Goose Elk never arrested anybody unless pushed to it. People could even poison other people's hogs and they wouldn't get arrested. Here it would be different. Arlie was just a baby; so was Hugh for that matter. But maybe the law wouldn't look on them as babies. Another thought seized her. Frank and Mario had sold the coin to Mr. Zabowski. Mightn't that get him into trouble,

It might. Then where would she be? Out of a job, that's where . Jobs didn't grow on trees. Not for somebody fourteen years old. Mr. Zabowski understood and was going to help her but who else would do the same? (p. 37)

She said, "Hugh, when the police come - if they come - you aren't to say anything. You don't know anything. It didn't happen. Just get it fixed in your mind that it didn't happen. Can you do that?"

Gravely Hugh regarded her."Yes. I think so."

"You'll have to do it, Hugh. There's no other way. Don't you understand? We came here to live, not get ourselves in trouble right off. It wasn't ... Don't you see? Maybe the gold piece did belong to Frank and Mario. But anyway, Mr. Zabowski has it now. He bought it from Frank and Mario. Don't you see?"

Hugh dropped his hand. "Yes, I see. All right."

Her head felt wobbly. She said, "Go out now and send Noah and Dwain in here. Don't make any fuss about it. We don't want Zollie or Pa or Juanita to know about this. (pp. 37 - 38)

Marvella immediately labels Hugh's action 'stealing' without really considering the circumstances. However Marvella already realizes that 'the law' in Chicago is probably not the same as in Goose Elk. She sees both the threat of Hugh being severely punished and the chance Mr. Zabowski, her employer, will be implicated as a receiver of stolen property; this in turn would mean the loss of her job. Using this reasoning Marvella advises Hugh to deny any knowledge of the incident,although she justifies her position by using Hugh's own excuse,and informs him there should be no 'fuss' in order to avoid disturbing the family's new-found sense of security.

Although Marvella still demonstrates her belief in law

and order, she recognises that the administration of law can vary between places and could greatly harm individuals not accustomed to its rigidity and harshness. Marvella is moving beyond the stage four level of moral development as her concern for the children and her parents supersedes her belief in the strict application of the law. At the same time her words to Hugh do not correspond with her level of moral reasoning. When she tells him that they must avoid trouble, the threat of punishment is implied, a pre-conventional level of moral development. The fear of losing her job for causing trouble for her employer involves reciprocity and places her reasoning at the conventional level of stage three, where good behavior is regarded as that which pleases or helps others.

(iv) Marvella moved a clock and wiped dust without flapping. "I think it would be terrible to be a thief. I wonder what makes one."

Mr. Zabowski fluttered his pale eyelids. "Who knows? Different people have different reasons for what they are."

"Yes, but to be a thief. I think that'd be pretty bad. You'd always have to be worrying about getting caught and going to jail. I wonder why thieves just don't work for what they want. It's a lot more simple."

"Some people don't like work," observed Mr. Zabowski.

Marvella laughed. "That's crazy. Work's good for the soul. Pa started teaching me that when I was just a little kid. Every one of my little brothers has been taught that too. We've got two rules we go by: Work when there's work to be done and go by the Golden Rule. Pa says if a person goes by just those two things he won't ever have anything to worry about."

No indication is given that Marvella recalls the incident involving her brothers' theft of the coin. Brought up by the work ethic and living by the 'golden rule', which is described as "do unto others as you would have them do unto you" (p. 97), she thinks it inconceivable that people would steal rather than work for a living. As she is operating at the stage four level of the law and order orientation, Marvella shows total respect for the principles imparted to her by her father, and an inability to imagine there would be any mitigating circumstances for stealing.

The 'golden rule' appears as part of Kohlberg's stage six level although at this point in the story Marvella does not appear to display a clear understanding of this concept as she has already told her brother to lie in order to avoid punishment.

> (v) Two men were fighting in the alley, running at each other, cursing, reeling, pummeling. They fell and rose and staggered away from each other to look for weapons. One of them emptied a garbage can and raised it high and hurled it. The other broke the neck from a bottle and with this in hand went charging. There was a long agonized scream and then silence.
>
> "One of them's killed the other," whispered Hugh. "Look, he's running away. Do you think we should go down? Call the police maybe?"
>
> Others from across the alley had heard the fight. Lights had come on and doorways had cracked. But no one had come out. The figure of the dead or injured one lay motionless, something near his twisted head glistening.
>
> No one came out to see about him. Presently the doors across the way were closed again and the lights went out, one by one.
>
> "Awful," whispered Hugh. "It's just awful. If this

was in Goose Elk we'd go down to see about him. Why don't we? Why don't the others? They've lived here longer and they're grown-ups."

"I think they might be afraid," whispered Marvella. "I am, too. Come away. Don't look anymore. It isn't ... it isn't for us."

Marvella's reply to Hugh's question indicates that she sees the murder as a lawless act which is contrary to the family's way of life. Hugh is unable to see why the adults' reactions should be any different to those of people in Goose Elk,but Marvella, who has already recognized the differences between the moral orders of the city and the country, fully realizes their fears.

Her reply to Hugh is strictly at the stage three conventional level of moral judgement, which involves conformity to stereotypical images of what is majority or 'natural' behavior.

(vi) Marvella sat down on one of the lower steps leading up to their apartment. Assailed by an overmastering sense of homelessness, she sat with her head slightly bowed and the fear in her was a living thing. Out of the corner of her eye she could see the overflowing garbage cans and the stained mattress and the barren alley stretching away to the street. Nothing pretty or good had ever abided in this place. It was Godless. The people were Godless. Always so surly and mean. There was a particular meanness in this place and its people and there wasn't any way to best it except to be mean yourself.

The oily, yellow clouds massed in the sky over the alley weren't moving. Hugh was looking at her, waiting for her to speak. After a while she said, "Hugh, we won't tell Pa or the little kids. Go get Frank; tell him I want to see him."

"What for? He can't help us. He can't help hisself. He don't want to talk to nobody, Marvella. He feels bad

> about Mario. Very bad. He don't want to talk to nobody."
>
> Marvella lifted her head and looked straight at her brother. "Go find him. Tell him I need to talk to him." (pp. 94 - 95)

Marvella is faced with the prospect of trying to keep the family housed and fed without any source of income. Now the 'golden rule' takes on negative connotations as she reasons that the only way to survive in the city is to be as mean as the other inhabitants. Therefore she sends her brother for Frank, who has already taught Hugh how to snatch purses.

Marvella has moved beyond the stage four level of moral reasoning to a period of scepticism. At stage four she saw the purpose of law and rules in terms of the welfare of others, and the moral code as the concensus of the norms and beliefs of the people of Goose Elk, a philosophy which appears to have failed her in Chicago. Ultimately her bitter resentment at this perceived difference in moral values and her own utter despair prompts her to reject the conventional level of moral reasoning.

> (vii) Toward dawn Marvella's brain wonderfully came to a curiously peaceful compromise. Things beyond her power and perhaps even slightly beyond her comprehension had brought her and her family to this place - to this point - and now, except for their own resources they were abandoned. If there was any help for this they would have to find it themselves and do it themselves. Nobody can live just on a promise. Until the government's promise was fulfilled and they could see it fulfilled they shouldn't believe in it. It didn't do anything for them. There was a difference in the people here, they didn't keep their promises. So different than back in Goose

Elk. Back home when people said shortly they meant shortly, not days and days. And they didn't run off and hide after they'd made a promise. They kept their promises even if they were bad. The Critchers had promised to run the Proffits out of the holler and they had. When you made a promise you kept it; it was the only way to do things. And you lived by the Golden Rule as much as you could. This wasn't always possible. Sometimes things got between you and it. It was fine if everything else was at least tolerably equal. But when you had little brothers and a blind father at home hungry and there wasn't even rent money coming because your job was against the law, well, then you had to forget about doing to others as you would have them do unto you.

In the five o'clock dawn Marvella turned in her bed and before her brain came to a standstill she thought again of the woman in the good shoes and the gold bracelet. She was scared of me, thought Marvella. I was scared of me, too. I never thought I could do such a thing. I've changed. I did what I did tonight because there wasn't any other way but I'll never do it again. Tomorrow I'm going to get a job. Somebody's going to give me a job. (pp. 96 - 97)

Marvella has committed her first theft but she is still faced with the problem of vindicating her actions. At first she reasons that the government's lack of concern for the family's plight is justification enough for turning to crime. However, on taking a more objective view of what has happened, she realizes that she cannot accept this change in herself.

Already Marvella is realizing that even though their position is desperate and the offhand treatment they have received from the welfare office seems callous, there are certain moral principles which she has to live by irrespective of other people's actions. In this manner she begins to exhibit a stage five post-

conventional level of reasoning, where after undergoing a period of cynicism about society's laws, the individual becomes aware of the importance of personal values and opinions.

> (viii) The interviewer (at the employment agency) had come to a card that caught his attention. He pulled it from the pack, read what was written on it and looked across at her. "Are you religious, dear?"
>
> Doubtfully Marvella met his questioning gaze. Which would work best for her? To be religious or not religious? One had to be so careful with these people. Should she say she spent all of her Sundays on her knees in church or should she say she was a heathen? Maybe that's what this job called for, a heathen. No. Nobody expected you to be a heathen, not even these Chicago people. She formulated a prudent answer. "In a way I'm religious and in a way I'm not. I live mostly by the Golden Rule. Of course I don't know everything about life yet that maybe I should know. I've been thinking I might join a big church. Become a Catholic or something like that. I like revivals. Back home, when they have them, we always go. We like the singing. Everybody said I had a good singing voice. I like to sing hymns." (p. 103)

In her efforts to get a job, Marvella no longer displays the same guilelessness as she did in her talks with Mr. Zabrowski. When faced with shaping the most acceptable answer to the interviewer's question, she knows that she must do so at the stage three conventional "good boy - nice girl" level of moral judgement. Although she has generally moved beyond the conventional level, Marvella thinks she is expected to give an answer which will please the man and secure her a job. Therefore the reply she gives is a garbled blanket statement which she hopes

will meet every eventuality.

> (ix) "He did it," whispered Hugh. "I saw him. Maybe that part ... him pushing me was an accident ... I think it was ... but he meant to ... I saw (Frank) push (his mother) ... it wasn't no accident."
>
> Marvella breathed and breathed again. The sound of breath filled her ears like rushing wind. Sickeningly she felt her heart turn and through and through her she felt the sudden lunge of real terror. Astonishingly she recognized the cause of the fear. I'm afraid, she thought, of us. Of what's happened to us. What we've become; the way we've changed. How we can hear and see and do such terrible things and afterward go to sleep. Look at us now. We're standing here now shocked to our roots because of what happened tonight but in a little while we'll go to bed and go to sleep and tomorrow Frank will come and eat with us and right along with him we'll act like tonight just never happened. That's the way we are now. We've become like Frank. Worse. We've become worse than him. Because we know about other things and he doesn't. Now we aren't natural the way we were back in Goose Elk. I'm afraid of us. We've got to go back to where things and people are natural. (p. 115)
>
> "We've got to go back. To Goose Elk. Now. Tomorrow. Before something real bad happens."
>
> "Yes," whispered Hugh. "But ... but how?"
>
> "We'll go in the car. I'll drive us."
>
> "I thought you was afraid to drive."
>
> "I am but I'll do it anyway."
>
> "It'll take money. What will we do for money?"
>
> "I have a little and then there's this - what you brought tonight."
>
> Hugh turned from the window and looked at the money lying on the table. "I don't want us to use that money. I wish I could give it back."
>
> "You can't, Hugh. There's no way. So we'll use it to get get back to Goose Elk." (pp. 114 - 116)

At this point in the story both Marvella and Hugh are stealing frequently to support the family. The horror of what is

happening to them is suddenly made quite apparent. Thus, Marvella proposes that they return to Goose Elk where she hopes they will be able to think and behave as they did before they came to Chicago. She realizes that their moral reasoning has changed and believes that the return home will correct it.

However, her experiences in Chicago have changed her, and in order to reach Goose Elk she will have to break the law by driving the car and also overcome her fear of driving. In addition, they will have to use the money which Hugh has just stolen. Marvella is reasoning and acting at the stage five level, where sometimes the law has to be changed in terms of rational considerations of social utility. In her sacrifice for the moral welfare of the family one can also detect elements of stage six or the universal ethical principle orientation in which right is defined by a decision of conscience in accord with self-chosen principles.

> (x) Marvella removed her foot from the step and turned and faced him. "Frank, we're going back to North Carolina tonight."
>
> Frank's grin faded. Something in his eyes shifted. He hooked his thumbs in his belt. When he spoke his voice vibrated with some hidden passion. "I'm going with you. I want to go with you."
>
> "No, Frank."
>
> Frank moved toward her and stopped. "Yes. I want to go with you. You've got to let me."
>
> Marvella lifted her hands. "Frank, I can't let you."
>
> "Why not?"
>
> "Because."

> "That's no reason. What's the reason?"
>
> "I can't explain it. It's something ... well, we aren't the same. You think different than we do. You ... what you think is all right is not all right. Not with us. If you went with us you'd bring ... I wouldn't be able to change you to our way of thinking. Your way of thinking and our way is too different. Besides there's your mother."
>
> Frank sneered. "Faugh to my mother!"
>
> Marvella was silent. The desire to get things straight between them - to somehow help him - was a real want but she couldn't find the words. Somebody should help him, she thought. But it can't be me. I don't know how. I don't know enough. I would have to undo all that's been done to him and I just wouldn't know how. (p. 118)

Having thought deeply about conflicting standards of morality, Marvella is becoming a morally mature person who can take a stance against Frank even though she would like to be able to help him. She knows her family's moral principles are quite different to those of Frank, but because she respects his worth as an individual Marvella does not say that he would destroy the family, only that she would be unable to change him. In contrast, Frank's level of moral reasoning is pre-conventional, and even though Marvella finds it hard to articulate her reasons for not taking him, the gap between their two ways of thinking is so wide that they really cannot communicate with each other.

Marvella's genuine concern for Frank, for the rights of her family and the very real dilemma with which she is faced, again moves her into the highest level of moral judgement (stage

six) involving the reciprocity and equality of human rights and respect for the dignity of human beings as individual persons.

Then Again Maybe I Won't by Judy Blume (1971)

Summary of the Plot

When 13 year old Tony Miglione's father has the good fortune to have an invention accepted by a large corporation, the family is able to move to a much wealthier neighborhood outside Jersey City.

Tony, however, is doubtful about the move as he is forced to abandon old friends, and he begins to note the disturbing changes which are taking place within his own family. His father, now an executive, can afford to be quite free with his money while his mother is studiously careful to mould herself and her family to fit in with the standards and expectations of their new neighbors. In addition, Tony's brother, Ralph, eventually leaves his job as a teacher in order to become an executive with his father, and grandma, who has cooked for the family in the past, is now replaced by a maid and meekly retires to her room to watch her new color television.

Tony is also faced with problems related to his growing sexual awareness, which he is quite unable to talk about with his parents, and he is troubled by the shop-lifting activities of Joel, a neighbor's son,whom he distrusts but who has won the approval

of Tony's mother for his impeccable manners. Physically and mentally upset by his real and imagined problems, Tony ends up in hospital.

However, in time, Tony is able to make many compromises with himself in order to accommodate to his new life and to the sexual changes he has undergone. Eventually Joel is caught stealing and is informed by his father that he will be sent to a military academy the following year. As Jersey City becomes a distant memory, Tony adjusts to his home at Rosemont.

Literary Appraisal

Told in the first person, Tony's story touches not only on his critical year of puberty but it also reveals a boy's growing awareness of the human frailities within his own family and adult society in general. For Tony, childhood ideals have to be compromised. His home in Jersey City is associated with happy memories of honest friends, a paper route and a relaxed way of life for his family.

The move to Rosemont signifies more than a physical change of location and better material opportunities; it means a break with childhood as he discovers sexual changes in himself. The new life creates barriers between Tony and his parents as he recognizes their hypocrisies. Tony is also becoming disenchanted with his brother whom he believes is fast sacrificing

his ideals. Caught in this unhappy situation it is hardly surprising that he, the youngest member of the family, should sympathize with the oldest member of the family, grandma, who also feels confused and unwanted.

The double standards of this well-to-do class, which deeply disturb Tony, are reflected in the character of Joel to whom Tony feels he owes a debt of friendship and yet whom he dislikes for his deceit and hypocrisy. There is some humor in Tony's descriptions of his attempts to hide an erection in front of the class and his frantic cleaning up operations after a 'wet dream', but it is the self-accusations, the internal arguments and occasional outbursts of anger against his mother and father which really capture the plight of this unhappy boy as he leaves the innocence of childhood.

Finally, as Tony approaches his fourteenth birthday, and plans for a private swimming pool are drawn up by his father, it is quite apparent that the former home in New Jersey will soon be forgotten. Tony leaves us with the distinct impression that with the family's change of fortune, he has lost more than his childhood innocence in the space of one short year.

Moral Dilemmas Faced by Tony

A total of 15 dilemmas faced by Tony were identified

by the investigator. These were:

(i) "Don't you forget to put my paper under my doormat!"
I didn't say anything,
"TONY ..."
Then I turned around and looked up at the window.
"Who me?"
"Yes ... you!"
"But it's pouring, Mrs. Gorsky," I called.
"So? You won't melt."
Maybe I will. Then you'll be in big trouble because my family will come looking for me and you'll have to tell them how I melted down to nothing right on your front porch.
I walked away from Mrs. Gorsky's house. She was still banging on her window. Well, let her. I didn't feel like climbing her porch steps. What's the worst thing that she can do to me? Call my boss ... that's what. So? He'll understand. There's no rule that says I've got to put the paper under her doormat. As long as it doesn't land in the bushes I'm allowed to throw it from the sidewalk. If this rain ever stops, I'll go back to doing it her way. Then she'll be satisfied. (pp. 1 - 2)

Tony's refusal to put the newspaper under the mat is followed by an involuntary emotional reaction in which he envisages his family coming to look for him. Then he starts to rationalize his actions. At first, the emphasis is on self, then on rules and the threat of punishment and finally on pleasing Mrs. Gorsky in the future.

Tony is at the pre-conventional level of moral reasoning, displaying a great deal of egoism. His concern for himself reflects a lack of feeling of identity with Mrs. Gorsky and her problems. As he is free from the constraint of adult imposed rules, he is

quite free to throw the newspaper as long as it doesn't land in the bushes. Tony is at the stage two level of moral development when he promises himself that in the future he will deliver the paper the way Mrs. Gorsky wants it delivered. At this stage of moral reasoning right action consists of instrumentally satisfying oneself and occasionally the needs of others.

> (ii) Frankie asked me could he take over my paper route since I was leaving town. I told him sure. I'd fix it with my boss.
>
> "My father says your father hit it big at the races," Big Joe said. "That's how come you got the car and all."
>
> "That's not how come," I said. "He invented something." How could Big Joe's father spread a story like that!
>
> "Yeah? What'd he invent?" Little Joe asked.
>
> "Some electrical cartridges," I told him.
>
>
>
> "Never mind any electrical cartridges," Billy said. "My father says your father's hooked up with the mob. They bought him the car."
>
> "That's a lie!" I yelled. I couldn't believe these guys. I always thought we were great friends. So why were they carrying on like idiots! "The car is part of the deal. So's the new house," I explained. "My father's got a good lawyer. He arranged it. A good lawyer's pretty important when you're making a deal," I said, like I knew all about it. (pp. 24 - 25)

Tony's friends show little pleasure at the good fortune of the Miglione family. Frankie sees Tony's departure as an opportunity to take over the paper route while Big Joe, Little Joe and Billy repeat envious remarks made by their parents as if they were well known facts. Tony is therefore dismayed that his friends are not behaving

in the way that he conceives they should.

Big Joe, Little Joe, Frankie and Billy are at the stage two pre-conventional level of moral development where human relations are viewed in terms like those of the market place so that reciprocity is a matter of "you scratch my back and I"ll scratch yours," not of loyalty, gratitude or justice. Although Tony has previously exhibited reasoning at this level he is disturbed by the reactions of his friends and indicates he expects them to show loyalty and a sense of loss at his impending departure. Tony has therefore been stimulated to think at the conventional level of moral judgement.

> (iii) "Okay," Frankie said. "I'll remember." Then he reached into his pocket and came up with a coin. "This is for you, Tony," he said, handing it to me."
>
>
>
> "Thanks a lot, Frankie. It's really interesting." I wished I had something for him too. I was still holding my Jefferson Junior wall pennant. I unfolded it. "I was hoping you'd come over this morning because I wanted to give you this." I handed it to Frankie.
>
> "Hey ... thanks a lot, Tony. That's really nice." (p. 28)

Having secured the paper route, Frankie's gift is a token of gratitude and a gesture of friendliness. Almost spontaneously Tony gives Frankie the treasured pennant, although he had not thought of giving him a present. When Tony parts with his most valuable possession, he displays a degree of altruism not present at the pre-conventional level of moral development. He is therefore

moving into stage three of the conventional level, which he had hoped his other friends would have aspired to earlier.

At this stage, loyalty is important, there is a sense of reciprocity and the egocentric individual is becoming more socialized.

> (iv) The doorbell woke up my father. He padded into the hallway in his stocking feet. This time when Joel shook hands he said, "How do you do, sir. Glad to meet you."
>
> I could tell right away that my mother and father were impressed. None of my friends in Jersey City say sir. And we don't shake hands every time we say hello to somebody. Are all the guys in Rosemont like this? I hope not. If they are I may not make any friends here. I wished Frankie lived next door instead of this creep.
>
> "Well, let's not stand here in the hall," my mother said to Joel. "Come in ... come in ..."
>
> Now why did she have to do that? Doesn't she think I can pick my own friends. (p. 38)

The appearance of Joel is not favorably received by Tony although the other boy's manners impress Mr. and Mrs. Miglione, a fact which is not lost on Tony. He also notes the differences in Joel's behavior to that of his friends in Jersey City.

Joel does not conform to the expectations of what Tony deems 'natural behavior' for boys of his age. Tony's stereotypical image of a boy's appropriate behavior is based on Frankie and his former friends of Jersey City. Therefore when he perceives his mother inviting Joel into the house, a clash is imminent between loyalty to the type of friends Tony wishes to cultivate and those his

mother would like him to have. This is a typical characteristic of the stage three person, who may join up with a particular group with which he feels affinity, but which is disapproved of by parents or school.

> (v) Is taking three batteries worse than cheating in arithmetic? Frankie used to cheat in arithmetic all the time in Jersey City. I never reported him. And how about the telephone booth at the Y? We all used to shake it to make change come out. And when it did I always helped myself like the other guys. Is taking three batteries worse than that? Well, what if it is! What am I supposed to do about it - call the police? I suppose I could. I wouldn't have to give them my name or anything. Or I could tell the man in the store about it. But I don't want to. Really, what I want to do is to get a look at Lisa's diary.
>
> If I tell on Joel we'll never be able to be friends. Just when things are looking good and I"m feeling settled. It would be bad news to have to start out all over again. (pp. 52 - 53)

Confronted with the discovery that Joel has stolen the batteries Tony is forced to consider what actually constitutes a crime. He compares the act to Frankie's cheating and taking money from pay telephones. However, he pushes these thoughts to the back of his mind when faced with the prospect of seeing Lisa's diary, not wishing to run the risk of losing a valuable friend, if he should report Joel.

Much of Tony's reasoning is based on the conventional level of moral development where he experiences a conflict between strict adherence to the law and loyalty to a friend. However, this

'loyalty' is based on his own needs rather than any real consider-ation for Joel.

> (vi) "Now?" I asked. I really didn't want to call anybody. I think you can get into big trouble for fooling around on the phone. But if I refuse Joel will call me chicken.
>
> "You can't call now," he said. "I only make one call a night. The next time you're over you can try it. Okay?"
>
> "Sure," I said. Whew - now he won't know I'm chicken. (p. 56)

Tony has the problem of deciding whether he should run the risk of punishment by playing the telephone game or of being called 'chicken' by Joel if he does not.

Again Tony shows that he has entered the conventional stage three level of moral development in which behavior should conform to the wishes of the majority, in this case his peer. He does exhibit some concern for breaking the law although he is more worried about the threat of punishment rather than fulfilling his obligations to law and order. Therefore Tony is operating at a pre-conventional level of avoidance of punishment as opposed to the law and order orientation of the stage four conventional level.

> (vii) Joel shook his finger at her."Will you listen to that!" he said to me. "Is she a good one? You tell on me, Millicent. You go ahead. Then I'll tell on you!" Joel shouted.
>
> "What do you mean?" Millicent asked.
>
> "You know," Joel said.
>
> I didn't much like him having a fight with Millicent in front of me. I don't think you're supposed to talk to somebody who works for you like that.

> "Oh ... you give me hard time, Joel. But some day God gonna punish you! You wait." Millicent crossed herself and left. I heard her slam the door to her bedroom.
>
> Joel turned out Lisa's light and we went back to his room. "How do you know she's not going to tell on you?" I asked.
>
> "She wouldn't dare!" Joel laughed. "She's scared of me! I caught her trying on my mother's clothes one night. If I tell my mother she'll lose her job. And she knows it!"
>
> I'm beginning to change my mind about Joel. He's not the kind of creep I thought he was when I first met him. He might last longer than a week in Jersey City after all. But the more I know about him the more I'm not sure if I want to be his friend. (pp. 58 - 59)

Tony is disturbed by Joel's attitude to Millicent and thinks there is a certain code of conduct governing the manner in which employees are treated. In addition, although he does not consider Joel to be the insipid boy he first thought he was, Tony has grave doubts about their friendship.

Tony's level of moral reasoning is beyond Joel's. He is moving away from strict loyalty to his peers towards respect for the social order, a characteristic of the stage four level of moral development. Although Tony would probably not report Joel, obviously the latter's pre-conventional mode of thinking has disturbed him and he knows that the behavior he has witnessed is not acceptable to society.

> (viii) All afternoon I kept thinking, I could be home playing basketball instead of wasting my time in a stuffy apartment in Queens. It's really funny, the way everyone is so excited about a baby that looks like a plucked chicken. Maybe Vicki will get better looking. Then again, maybe she won't.

Maybe she will always look like that. I feel sorry for her. But why should I worry? She's not my kid. Right?

When we got ready to go home I told Ralph and Angie that Vicki is really neat and very pretty too. That's what everyone else was saying so I decided to be polite about the whole thing. Sometimes it's better to tell a little lie than to tell the truth and have everybody hate you.

When Angie said goodbye she called me Uncle Tony and she kissed my cheek. I only let her because she just had a baby. (pp. 61 - 62)

Tony's reasons for complimenting his sister-in-law on her new baby are based on his wish to avoid disapproval and on the stage three concept of earning approval by being 'nice'. He thus allows Angie to kiss him as well.

(ix) That day at lunch Joel was in front of me in line in the cafeteria. He still buys his milk and apple every day. Always the same routine. But this time I saw him take his apple, inspect it for bruises like usual, then stick it into his brown lunch bag. He only paid for the milk. I really got mad when I saw that.

After five days of watching Joel do this I wanted to shout at the cashier, "Hey, this guy's stealing apples!" I'd yank it out of his lunch bag and shove it in the cashier's face. "You see," I'd say. "You see how stupid you are - even if you are in ninth grade! He's been doing it for a week - stealing an apple a day for a week - and you haven't even noticed!"

Then I figured the cashier would look up at me and say, "Please tell me what to do." And I'd tell her in this deep voice, "Call the principal, stupid!" Then the principal would pat me on the back and tell me," What we need is more young men like you, Mr. Miglione. Honest - brave - unafraid young men!"

But Joel would never speak to me again. Marty Endo and Scott Gold would call me Snitch. So what did I do about the whole situation? Nothing! As usual. (pp. 71 - 72)

Tony is becoming more and more frustrated with Joel's stealing. He is even more annoyed when the cashier fails to observe Joel's blatant pilfering of the apples. Although Tony conjures up a picture of himself becoming a hero for reporting Jóel, he cannot carry it through when he envisions the reactions of his friends.

Although Tony aspires to the stage four level of moral development, where there is strict adherence to the law, he still sees his actions in terms of loyalty to the group and their expectations of him.

> (x) The next day Mrs. Hoober rang our bell and I thought, she knows! She knows I've got binoculars and that I watched Lisa last night. She's going to tell my parents and they'll take away my binoculars and tell me I've got a dirty mind. They'll move me to another bedroom so I can't see her anymore. Maybe I'll even have to spend six weeks in the Juvenile Detention Center. If I do, I hope Lisa will come on visiting day. (pp. 106 - 107)

The onset of puberty coupled with his attraction to Lisa have aroused very strong feelings of guilt in Tony. Having watched her undress through his binoculars, he is convinced that Mrs. Hoober's call is connected with this incident and Tony thinks he has broken a law for which the punishment will be the Juvenile Detention Center.

Tony's movement to the stage four level of moral reason-

ing means that he recognizes there is a social order with rules which must be adhered to. Therefore he believes that spying on Lisa is against the law and he over-dramatizes the consequences. There is a touch of egocentricity in the manner in which he connects Mrs. Hoober's visit with his own actions.

> (xi) When (Mrs. Hoober) left she called to my mother.
> "Don't forget, lunch at the club in two weeks ... on Friday. See you then, Carol."
> "Carol! Who's Carol?" I asked when Mrs. Hoober was gone.
> My mother laughed. "Oh, that's what Diane calls me. She says Carmella's too hard to remember."
> "Just like Millicent! Just like their maid!"
> "What's the difference, Tony?"
> "Your name is not Carol!" I yelled. My mother just stared at me. "Why don't you tell her if she can't remember your name then you don't want to be her friend."
> (p. 107)

Tony is horrified to find Mrs. Hoober has given his mother a pet name in the same way she gave one to her maid. On the other hand his mother appears to welcome the fact that she is being patronized.

In the same way as Tony is unable to report Joel for fear of upsetting his friends, his mother is conforming to Mrs. Hoober's social set in order to be accepted at Rosemont. However, Tony recognizes his problem and has been stimulated to reason at a stage five level while his mother is fixed at the stage three level where good behavior is that which is approved of by the individual's peers. Tony finds it difficult to accept the fact that his mother cannot see

what is happening to her.

> (xii) One day we didn't have any change except pennies. So we chipped in ten pennies apiece and put them in the bottom of Joel's chocolate milkshake glass which wasn't quite empty. Bernice really hollered when she saw it. By that time we were paying the cashier and getting ready to leave.
>
> Bernice ran over to us and grabbed me by the collar. She's pretty big and I had to look way up to see her face.
>
> "You lousy kids! I oughta tan your hides! I oughta..."
>
> "Get your hands off my friend!" Joel said. "Or I'll call the manager." He sounded like he meant what he said - no fooling around.
>
> Bernice growled, "You'd like that wouldn't you! You'd like to see me get fired! What do you little rich kids know about earning a living? You think it's funny to make me fish around for a few lousy pennies? Well, let me tell you something. I need that money. And there's no place you can stick it that I won't reach in to get it! Your crummy forty pennies buys me a loaf of bread. Did you ever think of that!"
>
> All this time Bernice still had me by the collar and I thought I was going to strangle. But as soon as she finished her speech she let me go. We got out of The Bon Sweete Shop in a hurry.
>
> After that we never sat at a table in Bernice's section and we left our tip on the table - not in a milkshake glass. None of us ever mentioned the incident, but I know I thought about Bernice buying that bread with our pennies for a long time. (pp. 132 - 133)

Tony allows himself to be led by the group in the teasing of Bernice, the waitress, but her reaction disturbs him. Instead of thinking at the conventional level of moral judgement, he has a glimpse of the post-conventional or autonomous level when he reflects on the idea of her using the pennies to buy a loaf of bread. At this level, there is a clear effort to define moral values and principles which have validity and application apart from the authority of the

groups or persons holding these principles and apart from the individual's own identification with these groups.

> (xiii) The pens were displayed in a mug, practically in front of the cash register. While I was deciding what color pen to buy Joel picked two out of the mug and put them in his pocket. I think he took one ballpoint and one felt tip. They each cost 49¢. Joel didn't look at me. He didn't look at anybody. He just smiled his crooked smile and kind of hummed a little tune.
>
> I was furious. I mean really furious! I wanted to punch Joel in the nose. I wanted to mess up his angel face - to see blood trickle down his chin. I wanted to look him in the eye and say, "I've had it with you, Joel! You stink! Who do you think you're fooling? You think I'm afraid to tell the manager, don't you! Well, I'm not! Then I'd beckon with my finger and call, "Sir...sir..."
>
> "Yes, young man?" the manager would say, running toward me. By that time I'd have Joel by the back of his collar the way Bernice had me that day. "I've caught one of those shop-lifting kids, sir," I'd say. "If you'll check his pockets you'll find two pens. A blue ballpoint and a black felt tip." The manager would check and pull out the pens. Then he'd call the police. The police would arrest Joel and drag him off to the Juvenile Detention Center. My picture would make the front page of the Rosemont Weekly.
>
> Soon after I would be beaten up in the boy's room and left bleeding on the cold floor. My attackers would never be caught and I would live in fear for forever. (pp. 133 - 134)

Again Tony cannot bring himself to report Joel but this time his anger is so intense he almost makes himself physically sick. Instead of the previous pleasant pictures he had of being congratulated for Joel's apprehension, Tony now visualizes some very violent scenes, including comparing the way in which he will treat Joel to his manhandling by Bernice.

The sense of moral outrage at Joel's continued shop-lifting activities has now become very strong, placing Tony at the conventional 'law and order' level of stage four, but he does not have the moral maturity with which to cope with the problems he now faces.

(xiv) "Oh, <u>those</u> golf balls," Joel said, trying to laugh. But the laugh came out like a puppy's yelp. "My father asked me to buy those for him. "Here," he said, fumbling around in his pocket and coming up with a ten-dollar bill. "I'll pay for them now. I just forgot, that's all."

"Never mind," red hair said. " You should have thought about it before. It's too late now."

"Tell them, Tony!" Joel shouted. "Tell them I just forgot to pay!"

I didn't say anything.

"Tell them!" he screamed. "You tell them or I'll never speak to you again!"

So don't, I thought. Who did he think he was, threatening me! I can get along without you, Joel. I just realized, I can get along fine without you. (pp. 156 - 157)

Red hair and eyeglasses were walking Joel back into the store.

"Did you set him up, kid?" the salesman asked.

"I didn't have anything to do with it, sir" I told him.

"Maybe not. I have no proof," he said. "But if I were you I'd be a lot more careful about who I run around with in the future."

So when things finally caught up with Angel Face I had to be accused of setting him up. That's really something! Me - a criminal. Me - with my nervous stomach!

All these months of wondering what to do about Joel were over. Just like that! And not even because of me - because of a crummy closed circuit TV. I should feel relieved. I should feel happy, I told myself. But all the way home I thought ... Good old Joel ... that lousy creep ... fixed up a paperback just for me when I was in hospital ... yeah, but if it hadn't been for him I might never have gotten sick in the first place ... he told Bernice to take

> her hands off me, didn't he ... sure he did ... what could she do to him ... he's my best Rosemont friend ... at least he was ... well, wasn't he ... what is a friend anyway? (pp. 157 - 158)

On this occasion, Tony is forestalled from reporting Joel for stealing by the store detectives. However, he does not respond to Joel's plea to lie for him. Tony is now so firmly entrenched in the stage four level of moral judgement that he is fully prepared to sacrifice a friend who has broken the law. This in itself causes him a great deal of heart searching, after Joel has been led away, especially as Tony is suspected of being an accomplice.

The self reproachment he inflicts on himself is largely a result of the acts of friendship which Joel has shown him. Tony knows that he has had to make a choice between loyalty to a friend and to a law which protects society as a whole.

> (xv) The next day Mrs. Hoober told my mother that Joel was going to a military school in the fall because the young people of today needed strong discipline and that this particular military academy was just about the best there was anywhere. And that of course Joel would get a much finer education than at Rosemont Junior or Senior High. My mother thought maybe I should go too.
>
> "I want you to have the best possible education, Tony," she said.
>
> But my father looked at me and said, "Let's leave the decision to Tony this time."
>
> I think he knows I'll be okay now - that I can face things.
>
> "I want to stay at Rosemont Junior," I told them.
>
> I almost laughed. I almost laughed and said to my mother, "If Mrs. Hoober told you Joel was going to the

> Juvenile Detention Center would you ask me if I wanted to go too?" But I did'nt say it. And I didn't get any pains either. Because it was funny. Funny and sad both. (pp. 161 - 162)

The Hoobers' method of solving the problem about Joel is to send him to a military academy, which Mrs. Hoober justifies by saying Joel will receive a much better education there than at the local schools. Mrs. Miglione is therefore convinced that Tony would greatly benefit from this school too. As neither of Tony's parents apparently know about the shop-lifting incidents, Tony sees the irony of this remark.

The movement from stage three to stage four in Tony's moral development has given Tony the opportunity to confront a moral problem and deal with it independently. His new sense of confidence is reflected in the reply he gives to his father. He is also able to take a detached view of his mother, who is still operating at the stage three level of moral reasoning.

Tony is now moving towards the autonomous level of moral reasoning where he will be able to make decisions based on internal moral principles, while his mother remains fixed at the conventional level, unable to think and act for herself without the approval of her peers.

Takers and Returners by Carol Beach York (1973)

Summary of the Plot

Bored with their summer vacation at Green Hill Lake, six children meet to discuss how they will pass the time. The story is related in retrospect, by thirteen-year old Ellen, who has a secret crush on another of the children, Julian, her first cousin and two years her senior. The other children consist of Ellen's older brother Cam, her sister Kitty aged twelve, Julian's seven year old sister Jenny and twelve-year old Andy, a boy who lives at the lake all year with his widowed mother.

At the instigation of Julian, the children participate in a new game which requires them to be divided into two teams; one led by Julian and the other by Ellen. Each team has to take an item which the adults will miss and the other team must return it unnoticed. After some pressure, Ellen, the only dissenter, agrees to play. Her team consists of Kitty and Andy, while Julian chooses Cam and his younger sister.

Julian's team takes the first initiative and removes a bust of Dickens from the local library, which the other team successfully returns. They, in their turn, remove the weather-vane from the roof of Julian's home. Again the opposing team is able to return the object.

In order to make the game more exciting, Julian suggests

a points system and a period of two days before the whereabouts of the stolen object is disclosed to the other team. By employing some clever tactics, Julian's team then takes the local doctor's car and hides it in the garage of Miss Mindy, an old lady who is away for the summer. Besides being confronted by the difficult problem of how to return the car, Ellen's team is uncertain of how to match this latest move. In the end they lure away Miss Mindy's fierce little dog, which is being looked after by some neighbours, and hide it at Andy's house.

On the same evening as Ellen's team is returning the car by driving it down the back alley with the lights turned off, the other team is coming from the opposite end of the alley with the dog. When the children, who are in the car, suddenly see the others, they turn on the headlights. In the confusion the dog escapes and is run over by the car, which then smashes into a tree.

In a short postscript, Ellen recounts the punishment the children receive from their parents and her own sad journey to Miss Mindy, who is heartbroken at the loss of her only companion.

Literary Appraisal

The complicated rules, strategies and counter tactics of the game, along with the constant bickering of the children, dominates this story. Each move by the other team heightens the

tension as the children allow themselves to be drawn into the game, forgetting any misgivings they may have had about the morality of their actions. They become solely concerned with outdoing the other side, and fail to notice that they are being manipulated by Julian, who has worked out every move even before he proposed that they should play the game.

Although she is attracted to Julian, Ellen is wary of his schemes and only she appears strong enough to call a halt to the game. However, through the pressures of the other children, who all have their various reasons for giving in to Julian, Ellen submits to the influence of her peers.

As the game becomes more hazardous, the changing mood of the children is reflected in the weather. At first it is still, hot and lazy but as the heat becomes more intense, building up to a violent storm, so the children's squabbling and feuding increases. With the aftermath of the storm comes the dark, overcast night which contributes to the death of Miss Mindy's dog.

In contrast to the children, who appear to be galvanized into action by the heat, the adults are listless and not really concerned about the strange disappearance of their possessions. Indeed, they purposely seem to wish to remain oblivious to the fact that their children might in some way be connected with the unusual events of the summer.

However, adults play only an incidental part in this

world of adolescent relationships involving competition between rival personalities, and deference to a leader who devises and administers the rules of the group. Their seemingly callous behavior brings about a change of attitude in most of them, especially Ellen, but she is only able to fully recognize this when faced with Miss Mindy at the end of the story. It is then she realizes that adults and children alike have all become 'losers' during the course of this dismal summer.

Moral Dilemmas Faced by Ellen

> i. "You can choose first, Ellen," Julian said, looking at me intently.
>
> Something in his expression made me uneasy. Somehow I felt whomever I chose, it would be wrong. Julian was the only one who knew what the game was going to be. How could I know whom to choose when I didn't know what we were choosing for?
>
> "Tell us the game first," I said.
>
> He shook his head, and his dark eyes closed mysteriously.
>
> "No. You choose first. We have to choose first and then I'll tell."
>
> "Go ahead, Ellen. Don't take all day," Cam said.
>
> That wasn't fair, I thought. If we were going to play running games, I should choose Kitty because she was the fastest runner. (p.17)
>
> "I think you ought to tell us what the game is," I said again. "How can I choose when I don't know what it's for?" (p.18)

Julian has introduced the game and assumed captaincy of one team because he was responsible for the idea and despite some earlier protests from Kitty, the older children have accepted this as a natural event. However, now Julian expects Ellen to choose a

team without knowing the object of the game and she does not think this 'fair'.

Ellen is at the conventional level of moral reasoning: stage three . She recognizes the importance of the group but knows that each member of the group has a right to know the rules and purpose of the game. Julian's actions are those of an egocentric operating at the pre-conventional stage two level.

ii. Julian leaned back and smiled. He was sure we would all go along with him. We always had.

"What do you say, Ellen?" Kitty demanded, watching me hopefully.

"I don't think so."

"Aw - come on, Ellen. It would be something to do."

"Ellen's afraid," Julian said tauntingly.

"It's not that - "

But of course it was. At least partly. How awful to get caught! But that wasn't the only thing. Somehow it didn't seem right, the whole idea.

Everybody was waiting for me to decide. I looked at Andy. I was sure he really wouldn't want to play a game like that either. But I knew it was useless to wait for him to speak up and take my side. Andy never made decisions.

"You're spoiling everything." Kitty pouted.

And then from the house I heard mother calling us. "Give me my hat," I said.

Cam handed it to me, and the three other pieces of paper that had been in the drawing tumbled out on the grass.

"Come on,Kitty," I said. "Mother's calling ."

"Think about it,Ellen," Julian called after us.

But I didn't answer.(pp.23 - 24)

Having described the game and elaborated on the rules, Julian awaits Ellen's reply. Although the remainder of the group have agreed to play, Ellen is still reluctant to commit herself. She realizes that it is not only the threat of punishment which is

disturbing her but she has serious misgivings about the whole plan. Her only supporter might be Andy, but she knows he would not make that kind of autonomous decision against the wishes of the group.

The dominant level of moral development for most of the group is the pre-conventional, as they view the game in terms of the personal pleasure they will derive from playing it. However, Ellen is at the conventional level of moral reasoning, realizing that they would be offending the moral order which governs all of them. Instead of making a clear-cut decision she gives tacit approval to the plan, thus not risking her position with the group.

iii. "Julian and Cam," Kitty exclaimed."They took (the bust), Ellen - and now we've got to return it!"

"No, we don't. We'll give it right back to them."

"You don't want them to think we can't do it!"Kitty protested. She stood there in her shortie pajamas, her hair tousled, her face flushed with excitement."And we can do it, Ellen. If they got it out, we can get it back in."

"Kitty -"

"What's the harm?" she insisted. "Just tell me what's the harm. Miss Adams probably hasn't even missed it yet. We can go right down this morning and get it back before she does. That ought to show Cam and Julian we're as smart as they are."

I stood staring at the bust. Cam (I was sure it was Cam - he always thought of goofy things) had drawn curly pencil marks on the moustache.

"And if Miss Adams has missed it, think how happy she'll be to have it returned! It will be a good deed! We can smuggle it in - oh, Ellen, it will be exciting."

"How could we smuggle it in?" I objected. The statue was much to big to be hidden under the skimpy blouses and shorts we wore.

"We can get some bags, and it will look like we've

been shopping," Kitty planned rapidly. "Then we can go behind some shelves and unpack!"

I could hear paper bags crackling loudly in the silence of the library as we 'unpacked'. But I also began to have twinges of a feeling of challenge. Maybe just this one time, just to show Julian...(pp.27 - 28)

Whereas Ellen's immediate reaction is to return the bust to the boys, Kitty wishes to experience the thrill of taking up the challenge. Ellen is again reasoning at the conventional level, believing that the boys have broken the law, but she allows herself to be overruled by Kitty, who has an egocentric concern for carrying on the game. Thus Ellen recognizes her moral dilemma and yet she deliberately chooses not to face up to the problem. In fact, this time she too feels the challenge of besting Julian.

iv. "Hey," he said. "There's a pie cooling on Mrs. Lang's back windowsill. How about taking that?"

I couldn't help laughing. "Andy - a pie?"

"Nobody's around." He pushed back the baseball cap and rubbed the crease it had made on his forehead.

"We couldn't do that," I said. "That would be a dirty trick. It's probably for their supper tonight."

"But wouldn't that be funny?" Kitty giggled. "Think how silly Cam and Julian would look taking back a pie."

"No," I said firmly. "Nobody's pies." (p.34)

At this juncture, rather than merely showing a concern that they should not break the law, Ellen feels the theft of the pie would be a 'dirty trick' to play on the Langs.

Ellen is making judgements at the stage three level of moral development, where there is a strong attachment to persons and a belief in behavior which will please and help others. This

time Ellen is certain of her decision and adheres to it.

> v. Julian looked at me with a teasing expression. "If Ellen's afraid..." He let the sentence fade away unfinished.
>
> "I'm not afraid."
>
> "Don't you think your team can do it?"
>
> I tossed my head. "Of course we can. But it's still silly. Green Hill is too small. Sooner or later somebody would catch us, don't you see?"
>
> "What if they do," Cam said impulsively."If we return everything, what's the harm if they do find out?"
>
> "I don't think they'd like it. Maybe Aunt Lily and Uncle Peter would understand that the weathervane was just a joke, but stealing things out of the public library-"
>
> "It's not stealing," Kitty protested, sounding just like Julian had. "We return everything."
>
> "I still don't think they'd like it," I said stubbornly. (p.47)

Faced with the continuing problem of whether to remain in the game, Ellen uses various excuses in a vain effort to stop the other children. She clearly feels there is a difference between taking the weathervane and 'stealing' the bust, and is sure their actions would not be approved of by the adults.

Ellen is displaying moral reasoning at the stage three level. Although she is not prepared to argue the finer points of stealing, she does see the group's game to be in conflict with the standards of those adults to whom she owes loyalty and wishes to please.

> vi. I pulled the brush through my hair and stared at my own reflection in the mirror. What could we take?
>
> "How about Mother's punch bowl?" Kitty said suddenly with enthusiasm. "Cam and Julian might break it before they got it returned, and then our team would win."

"And then mother wouldn't have a punch bowl."

"We could buy her another one."

It all sounded so heartless to me, somehow. I felt depressed, and the brush went more and more slowly through my hair.

"Let's go to bed," I said. "We can talk about it tomorrow." (p.58)

Kitty and Ellen dispute whether they should take their mother's punch bowl. Kitty is still thinking and acting at a pre-conventional level. To her the punchbowl is merely an object to be used in the game; if it breaks, it can be replaced. As Ellen is at the stage where she wishes to please people, particularly her parents, she describes this as 'heartless'.

The difference between the level of moral reasoning and development of the two sisters is the basic cause of the argument, as Ellen does not really understand Kitty's egocentric remarks.

vii. "How about Mother's ring? She takes it off every night when she does the dishes. She puts it on that ledge by the sink. We could get that easy."

"Yes, and she'd probably have the plumber back, opening up the whole kitchen drain again looking for it."

Kitty knew how upset Mother had been earlier that summer when the drain didn't drain, and how difficult it had been to get it fixed.

"Yeah, I guess we better not take that," she admitted regretfully.

"Besides," I added, "think how bad she'd feel. We ought to take something that won't make anybody feel bad." (p. 59)

Again Ellen wishes to avoid upsetting her mother. Ellen does not say that stealing is against the law but instead she thinks that they should not take articles which would make

people "feel bad". It is not clear whether this includes people she does not like as well as those to whom she feels loyalty.

> viii. The car keys felt as if they were burning a hole right through my lap.
>
> "How could you do that, Julian -" I started to say, but Kitty interrupted me.
>
> "Unfair! Unfair!" she began to chant.
>
> Julian was sitting on the porch rail. He looked quite at ease, very satisfied with himself and not the least disturbed by Kitty's accusations.
>
> "What's unfair about it?" Cam looked so triumphant I could hardly bear it.
>
> "It is so unfair!" I cried.
>
> Julian smiled pleasantly. "We thought, as long as we're only playing one more time, we ought to take something really valuable."
>
> "Boy, is it ever!" Cam's eyes glistened. "About five thou."
>
> And Kitty and I had been thinking about things like punch bowls. "But what about poor Dr. Drover?" I protested. (p.66)

> My hand still lay protectingly over the car keys. But I wanted to fire them straight at Julian's beautiful, dark-eyed face. It was his self-satisfied expression and Kitty's determination not to give in that made me hesitate. Maybe yet, somehow, there might be a way to outwit Julian. And that would be a grim satisfaction in itself. (p. 67)

Ellen's immediate reaction to the news of the taking of the car is that it is "unfair". Her later reaction is to compare taking the car with their own plan to take the punch bowl and then to use the familiar argument of asking the boys to consider Dr. Drover's feelings. Finally, she again allows herself to be drawn into the spirit of competition.

Ellen is still under pressure from children at a lower level of moral development than she is. By challenging the

fairness of this latest move of the boys, she shows she is concerned with"fair play", a characteristic of stage three thinking.However, by allowing herself to be drawn back into the game, there is a measure of egocentricity in her desire to get the better of Julian.

At present Ellen is still entrenched in the stage three level of moral reasoning; if she were at stage four she would know that her only possible action would be to report the theft.

> ix. "I did figure out the most important part! I figured out something that would be easy to take but hard for them to return. That's what you wanted,wasn't it?"
> This silenced Kitty for a few moments anyway.
> "And it won't really hurt anybody either," I went on. "Miss Mindy's away, and by the time she comes home Sammy will be back again. She won't even miss him."
> "What if the Langs write to her or phone her and tell her he's been stolen?" Andy wanted to know.
> "I'm betting they won't." I was glad he had asked something I was prepared to answer. "I was thinking,if I was taking care of someone's pet, I would at least try a day or two to see if I could get it back before worrying them and spoiling their vacation. Wouldn't you?" (p.78)

Ellen has suggested that they match Julian's taking of the car with the abduction of Miss Mindy's dog, Sammy. She reasons that this will not "hurt" anybody as Miss Mindy will not be aware of it. Ironically she does not appear to consider the feelings of the Langs who are looking after the dog, except to say that they would probably not phone Miss Mindy.

Drawn back into the game, Ellen is primarily concerned

with beating the other team. Her rationalization of her motives for taking the dog indicates that she wishes to act at the stage three level, although she is actually behaving at a stage two level with its hedonistic way of thinking.

> x. "You children haven't seen Miss Mindy's dog around anyplace,have you?" she asked. Her forehead was wrinkled with a frown of concern.
>
> "Miss Mindy's dog?" Kitty echoed innocently.
>
> "Yes, you know - that little gray dog, Sammy.Miss Mindy's away, and we've been taking care of him, and he's run off somewhere. Nobody's seen him, and I'm getting so worried."
>
> "Have you told Miss Mindy?" I couldn't resist. I felt it would be doubly awful if Miss Mindy were worried, too, on the visit to her sister that she had told Mother was always so pleasant.
>
> "No, I haven't called her," Mrs. Lang said. "I didn't want to worry her unnecessarily. I thought the dog would be back by now. Once before he ran away, and he came back the next day. But that was when he was hardly more than a puppy, and I never dreamed such a thing would happen again."
>
> Then she added, "I finally notified the police after he'd been gone the first night."
>
> I felt goosebumps on my arms when she said that.
>
> "If we see him, we'll let you know," I forced myself to say. My voice sounded shaky to me, but Mrs. Lang didn't seem to notice.(pp. 106 - 107)

When Ellen is faced with Mrs. Lang's problem regarding the loss of the dog, she sees the woman is worried and this prompts her to ask the question about Miss Mindy. Although she is reassured to learn that Miss Mindy has not been contacted, she is frightened to hear that the police have been notified about the missing Sammy.

Ellen's moral reasoning seems momentarily stimulated

by the concern on Mrs. Lang's face, but when she hears that the police have been informed she reverts to a pre-conventional fear of punishment. There is no indication that she plans to confess to the theft or even that she thinks of doing so; her desire to win the game is the prime consideration at this point.

> xi. Her lips trembled as she tried not to cry, but tears welled up in her eyes and trickled down her cheeks as we told her it was just a game and we hadn't meant to hurt anybody.
>
> "We're really sorry, Miss Mindy," I said miserably.
>
> Kitty's usually perky face drooped with sadness. "Maybe we could get you another dog."
>
> "No ... no." We could hardly make out Miss Mindy's words.
>
> Cam couldn't hide his disappointment. "Are you sure?"
>
> And that was when it really struck home to me, the incurability of what we had done. For in a kind of flash, I realized that we had wanted to replace Sammy for our sake, so we could tell ourselves that we had mended the wrong we had done. But to Miss Mindy, there was no replacing the little animal she had loved - and we had destroyed. Chilled and silent, we all grew up in that moment.(pp.122 - 123)

The children wish to make atonement for the death of Sammy by offering Miss Mindy another dog and excusing their actions by saying they were only playing a children's game. Ellen knows that nothing can replace the dog for Miss Mindy and the only reason they are making the offer is to correct their wrongdoing.

The fact that the children do apologize puts their behavior at the stage three conventional level but the offer to replace the

dead dog with another one is at the stage two pre-conventional level where reciprocity is viewed in a physical, pragmatic way. Paradoxically, the understanding and sympathy Ellen finally shows towards Miss Mindy points to a post-conventional level of moral development where there is a respect for the dignity of human beings as individual persons.

A Hero Ain't Nothin' But A Sandwich by Alice Childress (1973)

Summary of the plot

Benjie Johnson is thirteen, black and addicted to "hard drugs". Living in a tough neighborhood and attending a school where there is much racial tension among the staff members, there seems little hope he will receive sensitive handling of his problem. However, Benjie's 'stepfather' is willing to help, although Benjie resents the older man's presence at home and inwardly scoffs at his position as a janitor.

The friction between a white teacher and a black one at Benjie's school results in the boy's drug addiction being detected, and he is sent to hospital for detoxification. On returning home Benjie steals his 'stepfather's' clothes in order to buy more drugs. As a result of his despair with the boy, the 'stepfather' moves out of the apartment into a downstairs room, thus forsaking Benjie's mother for the wealthier landlady.

These events have little effect on Benjie except to increase his hatred of his 'stepfather'. He attempts to steal the landlady's electric toaster to provide himself with more funds for drugs, but is caught in the act by his 'stepfather' who pursues him over the roof, and who has to save the boy from killing himself.

The 'stepfather' returns to the family's apartment and promises to help Benjie, who has now formed a new respect for the older man. They agree to meet at the drug addiction center where Benjie will submit himself to therapy. The question of whether Benjie is really sincere about this is not answered in the book as the 'stepfather' is left waiting at the door of the center hoping the boy is going to keep the appointment.

Literary Appraisal

The complexities of Benjie's problems are boundless. They cover home background, his immediate social environment and the school he attends. Often the problems are caused by the very people who profess an interest in helping him. Therefore this is their story as much as Benjie's, for only by examining their lives is it possible to determine the chances of Benjie's future success.

In addition to Benjie's own words, the plot unfolds through the eyes of those characters who stand close to the boy. However their monologues do not focus entirely on Benjie, but

reveal much about their own lives and the moral code or social system which they uphold. At school the principal is acutely aware of the drug problem, but maintains an air of concerned detachment as he reflects on past school achievements, present troubles and his impending retirement. For him Benjie's transition from school to hospital is a smooth routine operation.

Bernard Cohen, the white teacher, and his rival black colleague, Nigeria Greene, reveal their own prejudices in their reactions to Benjie's plight. Mrs. Johnson discloses her feelings of incompetence in coping with her son's problems and the 'stepfather',Butler Craig, regrets his own sense of helplessness. On the streets,Walter,the drug peddlar, defends his choice of job with the excuse that if he didn't sell drugs someone else would.

Callousness, sensitivity, frustration and even humor are all captured in the thoughts of the wide range of characters. There is an immediacy to all their problems as the style switches abruptly from the black vernacular to more formal prose. As each new monolgue is presented, juxtaposed with extracts from newspapers and other sources, yet another dimension of the total problem emerges as the character involved invokes sympathy or antipathy from the reader.

The inconclusive, non-resolution of Benjie's problem is the only fitting ending to such a story, yet there remains a

strong hope that even if Benjie does not keep his appointment, his 'stepfather' will persist in trying to provide him with strong paternal guidance.

Moral Dilemmas Faced by Benjie

> i. I hate for people to lie on me. No matter what they color or creed - I can't stand nobody lyin'. Everybody can be wrong sometime, and when you wrong, you oughta stand up and be wrong right out, and not be hidin lyin. When I'm wrong, I just be it. I ain't scared of a livin ass, not even if they kill me. Why folks got to lie and say I'm on skag, say I'm a junkie? My grandmother say, "You a dope fiend." I don't call her coffee fiend or church fiend. No, I don't do that. They lyin! If you "on" somethin, that mean you hooked and can't give it up. I ain't hooked. What's draggin them is that I ain't gettin off of it yet.
>
> I don't mind too much when parents and schoolteachers, social workers and head shrinkers tag names on me and go to generalizin. They ole and it's parta they nature to be sayin things like they know facts and you don't know nothin! But, man, it can get to you when your best friend, least somebody you thought was your friend, talkin at you and saying you on skag and how you better kick. When I hear that word "kick", I think about somebody tremblin and shakin and vomitin and screamin and goin crazy. Thass not me. I take somethin sometime, but I ain't no user.(pp.10 - 11)

> It bugged me hard when Jimmy-Lee start layin them jive-ass heart-to-heart raps on me. Talkin like he already a social worker. "Man," he say, "straighten up cause you gonna kill yourself." Answer me this, if Jimmy-Lee is my friend and I'm his, then that makes us equal, right? Then how come he talkin like he got it made and I'm lost? That ain't no way to be equal and reach somebody. He don't reach me a-tall! (p.11)

Hardened by the harsh environment in which he lives, Benjie expounds on his own particular philosophy in which there is a marked degree of egoism and a great deal of bravado. When faced with people calling him an addict, Benjie maintains that

they are lying. Although he can accept the accusation from adults he does not approve of his friend's criticism.

Benjie is at a pre-conventional stage two level of moral reasoning in which he expects people to approve of his actions as long as they meet his own instrumental needs. He persists with this point of view regardless of the fact that his drug taking may be against the law and regardless of the physical consequences to himself.

> ii. I don't dig stealin or gettin into dirty action just to get somethin for my nerves. It don't seem fair to anybody and I been fair-minded all my life. I had to take three bucks outta my grandmother's pocketbook, but I wasn't stealin it. Jimmy-Lee told me his uncle was givin him ten smackers for a birthday present. Jimmy-Lee bein my boon, I knew he'd lend me three singles so I could slip back what was borrowed before anybody found out.
>
> One time his father had give him five bucks for school supplies, and Jimmy-Lee gave me a single for myself; it wasn't even a loan, he just say, "Here you go, my man, that's yours." We used to do that kind of smooth action, look out for one nother. Many a time I lend him my skates and don't ask for them back, dig? But the one time I cop somethin, as a borrow, from my grandmother, his ole, lyin uncle didden give him the ten. Fact is his uncle went away on a cruise to the West Indies and act like he ain't never promise nothin! If he could go to the Virgin Island, why couldn't he hand Jimmy-Lee the ten? Answer me that.(pp.13 - 14)

Although Benjie professes not to approve of stealing he sees nothing morally wrong in taking money from his grandmother, when he hopes to be able to return it later. In addition he expects there to be an understood reciprocal arrangement between himself and his friend covering loans of money or anything else which one

of them needs to "borrow" from the other. Benjie questions the justice of Jimmy's uncle leaving to go to the Virgin Islands and not giving his nephew a promised birthday gift.

Benjie is reasoning at the stage two level where human relations are viewed in terms of the marketplace. Also evident at this stage are the elements of equal sharing and reciprocity but they are always interpreted in a physical, pragmatic way.

> iii. It like bein in jail. They askin questions and keep askin the same ones, then go on to somethin else, then final double back and ask the first question when they think you muddled up and forgot what you said. The mainest thing they want to know is how and where I got skag. You can get it just about anyplace, but I ain't gonna squeal ... and even if I did, the connection might not be there when they go to check him out. Sometime he ain't there when I get there. Connections float and change their scene, if they don't they'll get washed away in a sudden clean up action. (p.65)

Having been apprehended at school for being under the influence of drugs and taken by his parents to hospital, Benjie is determined that he will not be induced to disclose his drug contacts, especially the pusher. He rationalizes this stance by pointing out that the pusher might not be in the same place where he bought the drugs.

By maintaining loyalty to a specific group, which might not be approved of by society, Benjie's moral judgement is at the stage three conventional level. At this stage there is conformity to the stereotypical image of what is majority

behavior, which here involves not reporting one's associates.

> iv. I search for money. Ain't nothin in Mama's draw, or the kitchen, or the bathroom, or anyplace. I open the closet door, and there is Butler's best suit and overcoat. I'm not gonna go on skag again, but I'm gonna main it one more time ... so I'll remember what I'm givin up. I kicked once and I can kick any time I wanta. Butler deserve to be punish, and she do too. He livin with my mama and makin out like he care about me. They ain't ast me what I think about them livin together. If she want to live with somebody, why I gotta live with em too? If she separate from somebody, why I gotta separate? Bein a chile is bein a slave, and that's why I'm glad I'm not a chile no more. I'm takin his clothes; after all, he's takin my mama. Somebody who need the coat can use it, it'll do them some sincere good, and they'll gimmie a few dollars for myself. Damn, I ain't the worst person in the world.
>
> One day I deliver some skag for Walter, and when I bring his money back, he give me a light fix for free. I don't believe in stealin, but my mama would sure rather I take Butler's things than go round pushin for Walter. Anyway, what ever anybody rather, I ain't never comin back. My real daddy don't want me and I'm damn sick and tireda havin Butler strainin to make out like he digs me and I'm his boon. It ain't true! It phony everywhere! (pp. 75 - 76)

On being released from hospital Benjie tries to find more money to buy drugs. When he is unsuccessful he decides to sell his 'stepfather's' best clothes. His justification of the theft appears confused: firstly he wishes to punish his parents, particularly Butler for living with his mother, secondly, he reasons that the taking of the clothes matches Butler's taking of his mother, and finally he says his mother would prefer him to take the clothes rather than earn money from a drug pusher.

This passage has elements of both stages two and three

of moral reasoning, although the dominant one is stage two at the pre-conventional level. Benjie shows neither loyalty nor gratitude to his parents. Since he feels patronized and displaced in the home by Butler, there is every reason to steal his clothes in order to satisfy Benjie's own needs for pleasure.

Benjie does exhibit some feelings of guilt about the theft by trying to excuse himself with the words: "I ain't the worse person in the world." It is also apparent that his mother's approval is important to him which is a characteristic of the stage three level. However,in the final analysis,his reason for committing the theft is purely hedonistic,typical of the stage two level of moral development, and all his excuses are slanted to serve his own interests.

v. Maybe it's like Butler say before he move out on us, "Boy, you hate everybody, the whole country and all what's in it." Now that Butler is downstairs to Miss Emma Dudley's, I'm hatin him more than school or the society. He made my mother cry. "You got him!" he told her. Can't be both me and your son. I can't live with a lyin, thievin junkie! He's your blood, so there's no way to ask you to give him up. You got him, he's all yours!"

Mama say, "Yes, he's mine, and I'm his." She really standin up for me but cryin so hard like she can never stop.

Grandma was the one who surprise me, she beg Butler not to go."Damn",more than one time I heard her say, "Sure hadn't counted on him making this his full-time home." Now she turn round and say,"Please, Butler, don't leave us!" Grabbin at his jacket and tryin to pull him back.

Mama say,"Let him go!"

Butler look sheepy and say, "Hell, I ain't goin

> nowhere but downstairs to Miss Emma Dudley. Call if you need me." I hate him more than ever. He's gone, but Mama and Grandma still talkin bout him and wishin he was back.(pp.90 - 91)

Benjie's dislike of Butler has now turned to hatred. He bases his feelings on his 'stepfather's' abandonment of his mother and to a certain extent on the grandmother's change of attitude towards Butler. Benjie does not appear to experience any guilt feelings about his theft of Butler's best clothes despite the fact Butler has made it quite clear that this is the reason why he is leaving.

In his thoughts Benjie has now displayed a strong loyalty to his mother and a state of moral disequilibrium as a result of his grandmother's change of attitude. There are signs that he is having to re-think his moral position and is changing from the pre-conventional level of moral reasoning to that of stage three where there is some consideration for others, and behavior is frequently judged by its intention.

vi. "Benjie,you oughta do some better."
"Yeah, I do try."
"You lyin. I don't like that."
"Yeah, yes'm."
"That's better. Somethin on your mind bout me and Butler?"
"I'm glad he's gone away."
"We had planned to be married, but everything is so distress now that I'm not sure it's for the best.Why'd you steal his clothes, Benjie?"
I feel sorry for ner cause she ready to cry. She wearin a long housecoat with flowers on it, blue and pink. One thing , she always look nice and neat-lookin.

> Once, in school, I had to write a composition bout a member of my family, that was when I was young and in lower grade.(pp.101-102)
>
> Now she cryin. I almost wish Butler would walk in the door ... almost. Now she take the blue bottle of dye which a fortune-teller gave her,lookin at it, laughin and cryin because sometime she can be tickled and sad at the same time. She pours the blue down the toilet.
> "I know it ain't nothin," she say, "not a damn-ass thing. Nothin but ignorance and backward as hell."
> Jack, if I was a cryin person, I'd cry, too, but I can't. It would kill me dead for someone to see me cry, dig? Tears be burnin and stingin behind my eyes and like a heavy knot be in my throat. Somethin gotta be done fast, or else I'll cry like a chicken. Look like my mother dyin of sadness. I say, "Mama, maybe this blue bath gonna do some good." She look at me real kind and seem to feel better. Maybe when I get to be an older man, I'll dig where she's comin from much better. If I was old, in Butler's shoes, I might like some nice-lookin woman myself, even if she did have a son and a husband who was off somewhere. Life and the society must look different to old people.(pp.102-103)

Preceding the foregoing extract Mrs. Johnson subjects her son to a blue dye bath which she hopes will wash off the family's bad luck. Benjie expresses sorrow for his mother when she starts to cry. As he experiences his mother's sadness he obliquely promises to be a better person by saying, "Maybe this blue bath gonna do some good."

Benjie is looking at his mother from a new perspective, expressing feelings of loyalty and behaving in such a way as he thinks will please her and warrant her approval. By being able to feel empathy for his mother, he has reached the stage three level of moral development.

vii. Yeah, I dig him. After all, the man save my life. People don't go round savin other people every day, you know, specially people they mad with. Sittin in that cold, wet snow felt good cause I was joyin bein alive. Ain't nothin wrong with alive ... if you gonna be somethin, be that!

My folks didden go to yellin at me like they can do sometime, no, they didden. They was glad about me bein alive and well, everybody drondin me with smiles, they really was. Middle of the night I woke up from the fallin-down dream and was hearin the voice again in my head: "Butler, you are my father." I got up shakin all over and wishin I had just a light skin pop to steady down my nerves, but I didden make one false move. I figured me a way to keep busy till the shakin pass. I wrote on a piece a paper like how the teacher once gave me a hundred times to write - I WILL NOT ANSWER BACK - but, since this was me punishin myself, I wrote my own thing ... one hundred times: BUTLER IS MY FATHER... BUTLER IS MY FATHER...BUTLER IS MY FATHER... filled up both sides of my paper, two rows on each side, and had to sharpen the pencil two,three times. Was neat-lookin writin. Next thing I went out in the hall to where Butler's new coat is hangin on the rack ... and I fold that paper, put it in his pocket, then went on back to bed. (pp. 112 - 113)

When Butler saves his life, Benjie's attitude towards his 'stepfather' changes radically. He is especially pleased at the way in which his parents receive him with no recriminations. His indebtedness to Butler is genuine and he translates this into deeds by not taking drugs when he next feels the craving.

Again Benjie is at the stage three level of moral development, where reciprocity is seen in terms of loyalty and gratitude; good behavior is that which is approved by both his mother and 'stepfather'.

viii. Mama copyin down the hymn number while people

> coughin. She say, "I have to put a quarter on this figure. Poor Kenny might bring me some luck." I wanta say, "He ain't brought hisself no luck, what make you think he gonna bring you some?" But I say nothin cause she the boss on everything since I'm on parole. But she shouldn't be thinkin bout winnin money at a time like this. If I was dead, it would hurt my feelins to think folks wanta play my hymn number.
>
> I felt so glad when I step outta that undertaker parlor. Only disrespeck was three boys in the street, wearin purple jackets with green writin sayin "The Highest Eternal Avengers" ... they holdin signs, DEATH TO PUSHERS! KILL PUSHERS! I don't dig them uglyin up a funeral with signs. A couple a-times I delivered a deck for Walter, but I was not the real pusher myself. Glad I wasn't the one gave Kenny the overdose.(pp.116 - 117)

The two incidents at the funeral demonstrate that Benjie is now reasoning at the conventional level of moral development. He is disturbed by his mother's proposal to gamble on hymn numbers and by the appearance of the placard-bearers because he deems both events to be instances of inappropriate behavior at a funeral. Benjie also relates these incidents back to himself, showing a certain degree of egoism but more importantly an ability to put himself in the place of the dead boy.

Here Benjie is showing conformity to expected behavior at the stage three level as well as a growing realization of a higher moral code to which he knows he owes allegiance. His dislike of his mother's behavior would appear to stem from disapproval of an act which is at a stage two level of moral development.

ix. "Look here," he say. "Square your shoulders, admit you been a junkie, but now gonna stay clean and report to daytime center for your followups. If you don't do right, Butler gonna have to knock you down, you hear?"

"I can do it," I say, "long as somebody believe in me."

"Dammit, Benjie," he say, "you gotta do it even if nobody believe in you, gotta be your own man, the supervisor of your veins, the night watchman and day shift foreman in charge-a your own affairs."

Butler pull me over to the window, and we lookin down in the courtyard what's mixed up from people who throw garbage.

"Straighten up, Benjie," he say. "Do it even livin on the edge of ugly, cause we ain't got nowhere else to go right now. Will you be sure and report to followup tomorrow?"

"Yeah," I say, "but you be there too."

"All right," he say, "I'll take off early, one more time."

"Right on, Butler," I say, "and I'll never ask you to promise me nothin else."(pp. 119 - 120)

Having reached the stage three level, Benjie agrees to go to the center if Butler believes in him and will accompany him there. His 'stepfather' tries to indicate to him a much higher level of moral development in which an individual makes moral judgements on the basis of general principles which he has chosen to live by. This post-conventional way of thinking is not dependent on the approval of others and would appear to be difficult for Benjie to grasp at this moment.

This is the final dilemma Benjie has to face in the story. It is not disclosed whether or not he actually attends the clinic for his appointment.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF THE FINDINGS

In this chapter the findings of the content analysis conducted in Chapter III will be scrutinized. The procedure to be followed for the examination of the data will be the same for all four books. Firstly, the conflict situation which gave rise to each dilemma will be identified. Secondly, the person or group of persons with whom the main child character was in conflict will be listed. Finally, the specific area of moral development which the dilemma challenges will be given along with the level or levels of moral reasoning exhibited by the main child character.

These findings will be tabulated for each book separately and will be followed by a commentary on the significance of the data. The chapter will conclude with a comparative study of the significant differences and similarities which were revealed in the four books used in the study.

The Mimosa Tree

The identification of the conflict situations and those people with whom the main character is in conflict

A total of ten moral dilemmas facing the main child character, Marvella, were identified in the content analysis in

Chapter III. The dilemmas arose out of conflict situations with which Marvella was confronted as a result of her interaction with people in her immediate social environment.

The data which refers to these situations has been extracted from the preceding content analysis and is presented in Table I.

The stages of moral development of the main character, Marvella

In each of the moral dilemmas identified in the content analysis, Marvella's moral reasoning was classified according to one or more stages of Kohlberg's stages of moral development. The stages she exhibited are given in Table II, along with a brief description of the dominant stage or stages.

Analysis of the findings presented in Tables I and II

During the course of the study Marvella's level of moral reasoning is seen as moving from the pre-conventional level of stage two to the autonomous, postconventional level of stage six. Half of the moral dilemmas confronting Marvella stimulated her to reason at the postconventional level of moral development and on four occasions she reasoned at more than one stage.

Although Marvella was seen to be in conflict with individuals who were close to her in her daily life, on three occasions her moral reasoning conflicted with her conception of the law and the moral standards of Chicago society. Significantly

Table I

Moral Dilemmas in The Mimosa Tree: the Conflict Situations and Those People With Whom the Main Character Is in Conflict

Moral Dilemma Identified in Content Analysis	Conflict Situation	People With Whom the Main Character Is in Conflict
i. (p. 50)	Parental duty to the child	Marvella's father
ii. (p. 51)	Concealing unpleasant truths	Marvella's father
iii. (p. 52)	Concealing the truth about stealing	Chicago law enforcers
iv. (p. 54)	Discussion about extenuating circumstances for stealing	Mr. Zabrowski
v. (p. 55)	Reporting a murder	Hugh
vi. (p. 56)	Stealing	The government; people of Chicago
vii. (p. 57)	Stealing	The government; people of Chicago; the victim of Marvella's robbery

Table I (Continued)

Moral Dilemma Identified in Content Analysis	Conflict Situation	People With Whom the Main Character Is in Conflict
viii. (p. 59)	Concealing the truth at a job interview	The interviewer at the employment agency
ix. (p. 60)	Attempted murder	Frank
x. (p. 61)	Request by a friend who poses a moral threat	Frank

Table II

Moral Dilemmas in The Mimosa Tree: Stages of Moral Development of the Main Character, Marvella, as Classified in the Content Analysis

Moral Dilemma Identified in Content Analysis	Stages of Moral Development	Dominant Stage of Moral Development
i. (p.50)	Stage 4	Conformity to 'natural behavior
ii. (p.51)	Stage 3; stage 4	Maintaining, supporting and justifying the social order
iii. (p.52)	Stage 2;stage 3; stage 5	Recognition of varying standards of law and order
iv. (p.54)	Stage 4	Strict adherence to the law
v. (p.55)	Stage 3	Conformity to majority behavior
vi. (p.56)	Stage 5	Scepticism with the 'law and order' orientation
vii. (p.57)	Stage 5	Growing awareness of personal values and opinions

Table II (Continued)

Moral Dilemma Identified in Content Analysis	Stages of Moral Development	Dominant Stage of Moral Development
viii.(p.59)	Stage 3; stage 5	Perceiving that people's levels of moral development vary
ix. (p.60)	Stage 5; stage 6	Making decisions of conscience in accord with self-chosen ethical principles and with respect for human beings as individual persons
x. (p.61)	Stage 6	Making decisions of conscience in accord with self-chosen ethical principles and with respect for human beings as individual persons

her moral reasoning did not reach the postconventional level until she became sceptical of the moral conduct of government administrators and city-dwellers in general. Therefore, her decision to steal moved Marvella into a higher level of moral development, while her later efforts to influence the interviewer at the employment agency, in order to secure employment was a retrogressive step in her overall moral development.

Then Again Maybe I Won't

The identification of the conflict situations and those people with whom the main character is in conflict

A total of 15 moral dilemmas facing the main child character, Tony, were identified during the course of the content analysis in Chapter III. The dilemmas arose out of conflict situations with which Tony was confronted as a result of his interaction with people in his immediate social environment.

The data which refers to these situations has been extracted from the preceding content analysis and is presented in Table III.

The stages of moral development of the main character, Tony

In each of the moral dilemmas identified in the content analysis, Tony's moral reasoning was classified according to one or more of Kohlberg's stages of moral development. The stages he exhibited are given in Table IV, along with a brief description

Table III

Moral Dilemmas in Then Again Maybe I Won't: the Conflict Situations and Those People With Whom the Main Character Is in Conflict

Moral Dilemma Identified in Content Analysis	Conflict Situation	People With Whom the Main Character Is in Conflict
i. (p. 66)	Refusing to comply with an adult's request	Mrs. Gorsky
ii. (p. 67)	Friends' disloyalty	Tony's friends in Jersey City
iii. (p. 68)	Generosity of a friend	No conflicting person; Frankie's action stimulates the idea of reciprocity in Tony's mind
iv. (p. 69)	Perceived hypocrisy	Joel and Tony's parents
v. (p. 70)	Stealing by a friend	Joel
vi. (p. 71)	Inconsideration for others	Joel
vii. (p. 71)	Taking advantage of ones social position	Joel

Table III (Continued)

Moral Dilemma Identified in Content Analysis	Conflict Situation	People With Whom the Main Character Is in Conflict
x. (p. 74)	Spying on a girl	Tony's conception of society's moral code as represented by Mrs. Hoober, the parent
xi. (p. 75)	A parent behaving ingratiatingly	Tony's mother
xii. (p. 76)	Taking advantage of ones social position	Joel and Tony's other friends
xiii.(p.777)	Stealing by a friend	Joel
xiv.(p. 79)	Stealing by a friend	Joel
xv. (p. 80)	A parent behaving ingratiatingly	Tony's mother

Table IV

Moral Dilemmas in Then Again Maybe I Won't: Stages of Moral Development of the Main Character, Tony, as Classified in the Content Analysis

Moral Dilemma Identified in Content Analysis	Stages of Moral Development	Dominant Stage of Moral Development
i. (p. 66)	Stage 2	Satisfying one's own needs
ii. (p. 67)	Stage 3	Expectations of peer loyalty
iii. (p. 68)	Stage 3	Pleasing others and earning their approval
iv. (p. 69)	Stage 3	Conformity to stereotypical images of 'natural' behavior and loyalty to the group
v. (p. 70)	Stage 3; stage 4	Conflict between adherence to the law and loyalty to the group
vi. (p. 71)	Stage 3; stage 4	Conformity to the expectations of one's peers
vii. (p. 71)	Stage 4	Maintenance of the social order
viii. (p. 72)	Stage 3	The earning of approval by being 'nice'

Table IV (Continued)

Moral Dilemma Identified in Content Analysis	Stages of Moral Development	Dominant Stage of Moral Development
ix. (p.73)	Stage 3; stage 4	Conflict between obedience to fixed laws and loyalty to friends within a peer group
x. (p.74)	Stage 2; stage 4	Adherence to the law
xi. (p.75)	Stage 5	Perceiving that peopl's levels of moral development can vary
xii. (p.76)	Stage 3; stage 5	Defining moral principles that have validity apart from the group
xiii. (p.77)	Stage 3; stage 4	Conflict between loyalty to a friend and the maintenance of law and order
xiv. (p.79)	Stage 4	Upholding law and order
xv. (p.80)	Stage 5	Growing awareness of the relativism of personal opinions and values

of the dominant stage or stages.

Analysis of the findings presented in Tables III and IV

Tony's level of moral reasoning moved from the pre-conventional level of stage two at the beginning of the story to the postconventional level of stage five at the conclusion.

In 10 out of 15 dilemmas which Tony faced, he displayed moral reasoning at the conventional level. However, in most cases, there was a conflict in Tony's moral reasoning between loyalty to his peer group (stage three) and obedience to the law (stage four), when he was undecided about whether he should report Joel for shoplifting. Since the stage three level of moral development is the most characteristic stage for young adolescents it is appropriate that Tony should be reasoning at this level.

Finally, in all dilemmas, except one, Tony's moral reasoning was seen to be stimulated by his parents, relatives or close friends. His problems were of a very personal nature and ones which arose out of his daily contact with people in his immediate environment.

Takers and Returners

The identification of the conflict situations and those people with whom the main character is in conflict

A total of 11 moral dilemmas confronting the main child character, Ellen, were identified in the content analysis in Chapter

III. The dilemmas arose out of conflict situations with which Ellen was faced as a result of her interaction with people in her immediate social environment.

The data which refers to these situations has been extracted from the preceding content analysis and is presented in Table V.

The stages of moral development of the main character, Ellen

In each of the moral dilemmas identified in the content analysis, Ellen's moral reasoning was classified according to one or more stages of Kohlberg's stages of moral development. The stages she exhibited are given in Table VI, along with a brief description of the dominant stage or stages.

Analysis of the findings presented in Tables V and VI

There is little movement in Ellen's moral development during the course of the story, despite the fact that she displays evidence of stage six moral reasoning in the final dilemma which she has to face.

The dominant stage of moral reasoning for Ellen is stage three at the conventional level, elements of which appear in ten separate dilemmas. Ellen is at this third stage of moral development because her loyalty to her peer group conflicts with her desire to please adults, particularly her parents. In 9 out of the 11 dilemmas, the other children are named as the people who are responsible for creating a state of moral disequilibrium in

Table V

Moral Dilemmas in Takers and Returners: the Conflict Situations and Those People With Whom the Main Character Is in Conflict

Moral Dilemma Identified in Content Analysis	Conflict Situation	People With Whom the Main Character Is in Conflict
i. (p. 85)	Failure to respect the elements of 'fair play'	Julian
ii. (p. 86)	Stealing	Julian and the other children
iii. (p. 87)	Stealing	Julian and Cam
iv. (p. 88)	Stealing and upsetting others	Andy and Kitty
v. (p. 89)	Stealing	Julian, Cam and Kitty
vi. (p. 89)	Stealing and upsetting parents' feelings	Kitty
vii. (p. 90)	Stealing and upsetting parents' feelings	Kitty

Table V (Continued)

Moral Dilemma Identified in Content Analysis	Conflict Situation	People With Whom the Main Character Is in Conflict
viii. (p. 91)	Failure to respect the elements of fair play; stealing	Julian and Cam
ix. (p. 92)	Stealing	Julian's team
x. (p. 93)	Stealing; upsetting the feelings of others	Mrs. Lang; the police
xi. (p. 94)	Failure to respect the rights of others	Miss Mindy; Cam and Kitty

Table VI

Moral Dilemmas in Takers and Returners: Stages of Moral Development of the Main Character, Ellen, as Classified in the Content Analysis

Moral Dilemma Identified in Content Analysis	Stages of Moral Development	Dominant Stage of Moral Development
i. (p.85)	Stage 3	Conformity to stereotypical images of what is majority or natural behavior
ii. (p.86)	Stage 3; stage 4	Orientation towards authority and fixed rules
iii. (p.87)	Stage 2; stage 4	Orientation towards authority and fixed rules
iv. (p .88)	Stage 3	Behaving to help or please others
v. (p.89)	Stage 3	Conflict between loyalty to a group and to that behavior which would be likely to have parental approval
vi. (p.89)	Stage 3	Behaving to help or please others
vii. (p.90)	Stage 3	Behaving to help or please others

Table VI (Continued)

Moral Dilemma Identified in Content Analysis	Stages of Moral Development	Dominant Stage of Moral Development
viii. (p.91)	Stage 3	Group conformity to 'fair play'
ix. (p.92)	Stage 2;stage 3	Satisfying one's own needs and occasionally the needs of others
x. (p.	Stage 3; stage 4	Pleasing others; recognition of the authority of the law
xi.	Stage 2; stage 3; stage 6	Pleasing others; equal sharing; respect for the dignity of human beings as individual persons

her mind Only rarely does the stage four emphasis on maintaining law and order feature in Ellen's reasoning.

According to Kohlberg's theories, Ellen's eventual reasoning at the stage six level would be implausible, as there is no evidence to suggest that she had previously fully reached the conventional stage four level of moral development and, as stated in Chapter II, Kohlberg emphasized that each individual has to progress through the stages in sequence.

A Hero Ain't Nothin' But A Sandwich

The identification of the conflict situations and those people with whom the main character is in conflict

A total of nine moral dilemmas facing the main child character, Benjie, were identified in the content analysis conducted in Chapter III. The dilemmas arose out of conflict situations with which Benjie was confronted as a result of his interaction with people in his immediate social environment.

The data referring to these situations has been extracted from the preceding content analysis and is presented in Table VII.

The stages of moral development of the main character, Benjie

In each of the moral dilemmas identified in th content analysis, Benjie's moral reasoning was classified according to one or more of Kohlberg's stages of moral development. The stages he exhibited are given in Table VIII, along with a brief description of the dominant stages.

Table VII

Moral Dilemmas in A Hero Ain't Nothin' But A Sandwich: the Conflict Situations and Those People With Whom the Main Character Is in Conflict

Moral Dilemma Identified in Content Analysis	Conflict Situation	People With Whom the Main Character Is in Conflict
i. (p.98)	Drug addiction	Parents and grandmother
ii. (p.99)	Stealing	Adults and close friends
iii. (p.100)	Concealing the truth	Law enforcers
iv. (p.101)	Stealing	Parents
v. (p.102)	Filial loyalty	Parents and grandmother
vi. (p.103)	Filial loyalty	Mother
vii. (p.105)	Receiving fair treatment for a misdemeanor	Parents
viii. (p.105)	Violations of the sanctity attached to a funeral	Mother; placard bearers
ix. (p.107)	Filial loyalty	'Stepfather'

Table VIII

Moral Dilemmas in A Hero Ain't Nothin' But A Sandwich: Stages of Moral Development of the Main Character, Benjie, as Classified in the Content Analysis

Moral Dilemma Identified in Content Analysis	Stages of Moral Development	Dominant Stage of Moral Development
i. (p.98)	Stage 2	Expecting people to approve of one's needs
ii. (p.99)	Stage 2	Viewing human relationships in terms of the market place
iii. (p.100)	Stage 3	Conformity to stereotypical images of what is majority behavior; loyalty to the group
iv. (p.101)	Stage 2; stage 3	Shaping one's own needs; seeking approval of one's parents
v. (p.102)	Stage 3	Loyalty to one's parents
vi. (p.103)	Stage 3	Exhibiting conduct which will please others and be approved by them

Table VIII (Continued)

Moral Dilemma Identified in Content Analysis	Stages of Moral Development	Dominant Stage of Moral Development
vii. (p.105)	Stage 3	Reciprocity is expressed in terms of loyalty and gratitude
viii.(p.105)	Stage 3; stage 4	Conforming to expected or 'natural' behavior; showing respect for fixed rules
ix. (p.107)	Stage 3	Behaving in a manner which will please others

Analysis of the findings in Table VII and VIII

Benjie's moral reasoning changes from stage two at the pre-conventional level, to stage three at the conventional level of moral development during the story. This indicates a decreasing emphasis on the satisfaction of his own needs in favor of trying to win the approval of other people.

In seven out of nine dilemmas, Benjie was seen to display traits of stage three moral reasoning and is therefore at a point in his moral development which is most characteristic for young people of his age .

Benjie's moral reasoning was seen to be stimulated by, or in conflict with, his parents in seven dilemmas. Both parents would seem to wield a strong influence over him, although in the moral dilemma at the funeral he is shown to disapprove of his mother's actions, thus stimulating him to reason at the stage four level of moral development.

A Comparative Study of the Findings for the Four Books

The content analysis conducted in Chapter III revealed that in each of the four books examined for the purpose of this study, there was an average of 11 moral dilemmas.

Moral dilemmas were defined in Chapter I as:

> Moral problems which create a conflict situation in the mind as they cannot be resolved through the application of conventional value concepts, but which stimulate the individual to higher levels of moral reasoning.

Eighteen of the 45 dilemmas identified in the four books examined, involved stealing by the child protagonists or by their peers. Other major problems were concerned with concealing the truth and deciding whether one should remain loyal to one's peer group, one's parents or the established law laid out by society. Despite the fact that confrontation with a moral dilemma did not automatically move a character to a higher level of moral reasoning, there was an overall upward movement in the moral development of all four child characters.

In three of the books examined, Then Again Maybe I Won't, Takers and Returners, and A Hero Ain't Nothin' But A Sandwich, the main child characters were all 13 years old. This is the age when the majority of young people are at the stage three level of moral development. The dominant stage of moral reasoning for the young people portrayed as the chief characters in the three foregoing titles was either stage three or stage four of the conventional level of moral development.

At stage three young people are particularly susceptible to peer group pressures and this constitutes the main problem for Tony in Then Again Maybe I Won't and Ellen in Takers and Returners. The problem of loyalty to his peers directly influences Tony's moral reasoning seven times, while Ellen submits to peer pressures throughout most of the story. On the other hand,

Benjie in A Hero Ain't Nothin' But A Sandwich is only asked once to make a moral decision involving loyalty to a group and he automatically decides in the group's favor. By the end of the book Benjie's loyalties appear to lie more with his 'stepfather', placing him at the stage three level of moral development. Tony in Then Again Maybe I Won't and Ellen in Takers and Returners, are fixed at this third stage of moral development during a major part of both books but, with their problems regarding peer group pressures partially resolved, they move into the post-conventional level of moral reasoning.

There is a significant difference between the type of dilemma encountered in these three books and that in The Mimosa Tree, where the child character is aged 14 and expected to play a parental role. In Then Again Maybe I Won't and Takers and Returners the problems of the two main characters arise directly from their dealings with close friends, parents or neighbors. Except for two occasions the same is true for Benjie in A Hero Ain't Nothin' But A Sandwich. However, Marvella in The Mimosa Tree is faced with larger more universal problems involving her conception of law enforcement in Chicago, and differences between the moral codes of those living in the country and those who reside in the city. As a result, Marvella is challenged to think at the post-conventional level of moral reasoning in half of the total number of moral dilemmas she encounters. She is the only

child character in all four books to fully reach the stage four level of moral development.

In the literary appraisals of Then Again Maybe I Won't and Takers and Returners it was noted that the entire stories were related by the two main characters. It was also emphasized that whereas there is an immediacy to Tony's account of his problems, Ellen's story is told as though in retrospect. While Tony's story focuses almost exclusively on the problems he faces, Ellen's narration is more concerned with the unfolding of the plot .These differences in literary style and author intention are reflected in the moral development of the two characters.

Although both these child characters remained fixed at the stage three level for a considerable length of time, Tony moves gradually from the stage two level in the first dilemma to stage five at the end of the book, when he demonstrates that he is thinking at the post-conventional level. On the other hand, Ellen, in Takers and Returners, shows no indication of reasoning at a stage five level of moral development and yet in her final dilemma she expresses thoughts at a stage six level.

The content analysis in Chapter III also considered the differing attitudes towards parents which play such an important role in Then Again Maybe I Won't and A Hero Ain't Nothin' But A Sandwich. These attitudes are accounted for in the moral development of the two characters involved. Whereas Tony finds

it is difficult to understand the moral conduct of his mother, which is at a stage of development lower than his, Benjie aspires to the higher level of moral development as demonstrated by his 'stepfather' in the final dilemma of A Hero Ain't Nothin' But A Sandwich.

Ellen, in Takers and Returners, allows herself to be more influenced by the group than by her parents so that she regresses to the pre-conventional stage two level of moral development. However, Marvella, in The Mimosa Tree, has to assume the role of parent to her family and in doing so makes decisions at the post-conventional level of moral development during a substantial part of the book.

Significantly, then, the central child character is seen to be battling with a number of negative forces. In nearly every moral dilemma faced by the children, adults and peers alike made moral decisions which were lower than the level of moral reasoning dis-played by the main child character. Three exceptions were: the 'stepfather' in A Hero Ain't Nothin' But A Sandwich, Frankie in Then Again Maybe I Won't, and Marvella's father in The Mimosa Tree.

Summary

The analysis of the data gathered in the content analysis revealed that there is an average of 11 moral dilemmas faced by the main child character in each of the four books examined. These dilemmas met the definition of the term moral dilemma

as stated for the purpose of this study, although it was noted that the moral dilemmas did not always immediately stimulate the character to a higher level of moral reasoning. However, it was found that there was an overall upward movement in moral development for all main characters as a result of being confronted with these dilemmas.

All the moral dilemmas identified forced the characters to exhibit traits of moral reasoning which could be classified according to Kohlberg's stages of moral development, and it appeared that except for one occasion, concerning Ellen in Takers and Returners, the moral reasoning of the main chiid characters was appropriate to their age and circumstances.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Firstly, a summary of the purpose and design of the study will be presented in this chapter; secondly the major findings will be discussed in terms of the hypotheses of the study. Thirdly, a section on educational implications will further consider the third hypothesis set forth in Chapter I, where it was stated that the use of Kohlberg's philosophy of moral development would enable teachers to plan specific aspects of the literature progam based on a discussion of moral dilemmas. The final section of the chapter will present suggestions for further research.

Summary

Purposes of the Study

A great deal of controversy has surrounded education's handling of moral issues. The recent phenomenal increase in works of fiction for children which purport to deal in a realistic manner with moral problems would appear to offer invaluable resource material for literature programs at the grade six or grade seven level.

This study was undertaken to investigate the suitability of using Kohlberg's findings on moral development as a criterion

for evaluating books which portray child characters faced with moral problems. Kohlberg's philosophy was deemed suitable for this type of evaluation, as he maintains that an individual reaches a level of moral maturity after experiencing problems which force him to make independent moral decisions. Thus, the study identified the moral dilemmas facing the main child character in each of four contemporary child novels. These dilemmas were extracted and the character's moral reasoning classified according to Kohlberg's stages of moral development.

Many studies have been carried out to determine the presence of moral values in children's literature. The majority of these studies have attempted to show how fiction can be used to instil conventional values and to help an individual child or group of children with problems of life adjustment. In contrast, it was proposed in this study to demonstrate that the identification of moral dilemmas within the child novel could be used to increase children's understanding of novels by challenging their intellect and stimulating their moral reasoning. Therefore, the discussion of moral dilemmas in literature might contribute to the child's moral development in an indirect fashion.

Design of the Study

All novels deemed suitable for children aged 11 to 14, which were reviewed in four leading periodical selection aids

between January, 1970, and December, 1975, were considered for this study. The final choice of the four books to be studied was made on the basis of their overall literary merit, their unconventional handling of theme, the presence of conflict situations in the plot and the extent to which each book met the study's definition of the 'child novel'. The term 'child novel' was applied to books containing child characters who live in a contemporary setting and who are faced with critical problems of self identity as they experience the process of growing up and adapting to the world around them. All the books which were finally selected handled the problem of stealing as well as other conflict situations which forced the main child characters to make moral decisions.

The same procedure was followed for the content analysis of each book. This involved a short plot summary, a literary appraisal, and the extraction of incidents which met the study's definition of a moral dilemma. On each occasion, an examination was made of the main child character's moral reasoning, which was then classified according to Kohlberg's stages of moral development.

The final phase of the study entailed the tabulation of the findings of the content analysis in the following format:

i. The identification for each moral dilemma of the conflict situation and the people with whom the main

character was in conflict.

ii. The classification of the character's moral reasoning according to Kohlberg's stages of moral development.

The data from the analysis was first considered separately for each book and then all four books were compared in order to facilitate drawing conclusions regarding the presence of moral dilemmas and moral reasoning in the child novel.

Conclusions

Three hypotheses were set forth in Chapter I in order to clarify the purpose of the study. That purpose was to investigate the suitability of using Kohlberg's findings on moral development as a criterion for evaluating child novels which deal with moral issues,and to develop a procedure for the selection of appropriate works of fiction as a basis for the classroom discussion of moral problems encountered in literature.

Following a restatement of each hypothesis, the findings related to these hypotheses are set out and conclusions drawn.

Hypothesis One: Moral dilemmas comparable to those defined and described by Kohlberg are present in some child novels

The analysis of the findings of the content analysis presented in Chapter IV concluded that each of the child novels used for the purpose of the study had an average number of 11 moral dilemmas which met the definition of the term moral

dilemma as laid out in Chapter I. Based on the work of Kohlberg this definition stated that moral dilemmas are those problems which create a conflict situation in the mind as they cannot be resolved through the application of conventional value concepts, but which stimulate the individual to higher levels of moral reasoning. Although it was found that exposure to a moral dilemma did not always immediately stimulate the character to a higher level of moral reasoning, there was an overall upward movement in moral development for all main characters as a result of being confronted with these dilemmas.

The content analysis also revealed that each of the four books concentrated on the story of an individual child. In three of the novels, Then Again Maybe I Won't, Takers and Returners, and A Hero Ain't Nothin' But A Sandwich, the leading child character was aged 13, and in the remaining book, The Mimosa Tree, the child was 14 years of age.

Although, at first, all these children may have been acting in accordance with moral codes laid down by their parents, as for example in the case of Marvella in The Mimosa Tree, they all faced problems which caused a certain degree of moral conflict. These problems were too complex to be solved on the simple basis of right or wrong.

All the children had reached an age where parental

influence was decreasing in the face of outside pressures, usually peer group loyalty. In most situations the children were portrayed as having to make moral decisions quite independently, without any reference to parental or other adult help. This could have been due partly to extraordinary circumstances in which the children found themselves, as was the case in Takers and Returners, when Ellen was persuaded against her better judgement to participate in a dangerous game. It could also be explained on the basis that the children could no longer unequivocably accept parental standards of morality as illustrated by Tony's position in Then Again Maybe I Won't.

In each of the four novels examined, the moral dilemmas facing the main child character were integral to the development of the plot. As all the child characters had reached a stage in their lives when they might have suffered some disillusionment with parental conduct or they were uncertain where their true loyalties lay, they experienced a certain measure of disequilibrium when called on to make a moral decision.

Hypothesis Two: When confronted with a moral problem, literary characters within these works of fiction exhibit similar traits of moral reasoning to those described by Kohlberg in his stages of moral development.

The content analysis revealed that the moral reasoning of the main child characters in all four books could be classified according to Kohlberg's stages of moral development. In each

novel the child characters were confronted with difficult problems at a time when they were experiencing increasing isolation from either their friends or their relatives. The only resource at their disposal was their own moral reasoning, which as shown in the content analysis, guided the type of judgements they eventually made.

Two of the children, Tony, in Then Again Maybe I Won't and Benjie, in A Hero Ain't Nothin' But A Sandwich, were at the pre-conventional level of moral development when they were first shown being confronted with a moral problem; Marvella, in The Mimosa Tree and Ellen, in Takers and Returners were at the conventional level of moral development for their first dilemma. The type of reasoning experienced by these children in subsequent dilemmas and their overall moral development during the course of the stories was seen to be appropriate to the circumstances in which they found themselves. The only exception was Ellen, who failed to display reasoning at the stage five level of moral development before she reached stage six.

In the other books, Tony of Then Again Maybe I Won't experienced a number of moral crises for which he had to provide his own solutions; finally, he moved into the autonomous level of moral development. Benjie, in A Hero Ain't Nothin' But A Sandwich, was already the victim of a threatening social environment and

desperately needed adult guidance; the help eventually came from his stepfather and the boy reached the stage three level of moral development. In The Mimosa Tree , Marvella realized that moral problems could not always be resolved according to rigid standards of right or wrong; her overall moral development reached the highest stage of the postconventional level before the close of the story.

In spite of the aforementioned discrepancy in Ellen's moral development in Takers and Returners, the responses she gave to all but one of the moral dilemmas were seen to be appropriate for her age and the circumstances in which she found herself. Indeed, the tragic results of her decision to follow the group rather than rely on her own moral judgements made Ellen suddenly aware of the autonomous level of moral development.

Whether the main child characters in these novels were influenced by their peers or by other considerations, each one had to independently undertake some form of moral reasoning in order to resolve the dilemma with which they were confronted. In so doing, they displayed moral reasoning which could be classified according to Kohlberg's stages of moral development.

Hypothesis Three: The use of Kohlberg's philosophy as a means of evaluating the moral aspects of the child novel will enable teachers to plan literature lessons based on the discussion of moral dilemmas within the narrative.

Although it was necessary for the purpose of this study

to focus only on the moral dilemmas that occurred in each book, the findings of the content analysis showed that the character's response to a dilemma was vital to the overall development of both the plot and the characterization. In the three novels, Then Again Maybe I Won't, Takers and Returners and A Hero Ain't Nothin' But a Sandwich, the first person narrations shed a great deal of light on the moral reasoning of the main characters. Also the social climates in which all the stories were set contributed to the types of moral dilemma which were faced by each of the characters.

It would be incorrect to maintain that the procedure used for the purposes of this study is the only method of evaluating the child novel and gauging its potential use in the classroom literature program. However the findings of this study suggest that the identification of the moral dilemmas in a story could contribute to the overall understanding and appreciation of the child novel. The correlation between Kohlberg's philosophy of moral development and the authors' method of depicting a child's moral development in all the books examined indicates the strong possibility that this type of evaluation could be applied to other child novels, meeting the conditions laid down in

this study. Suggestions of how these findings could provide a framework for a literature program dealing with moral problems encountered in this type of juvenile fiction are therefore outlined in the following section.

Implications

The findings of the study have implications for those educators concerned with the selection of works of fiction for children and their use of these books within the classroom. However, should the focus of a literature program be on the moral problems raised in the child novel, then the teacher is strongly cautioned not to ignore those parts of the book which are not concerned with these issues.

When selecting novels which would form the basis of a discussion about moral problems, the teacher would be advised to follow these procedures:

i. Read reviews in selection aids to ascertain which child novels being published would be suitable for the age range of their students.

ii. Assess each selected book for its overall literary merit (plot, characterization, tone, style, theme and setting).

iii. Identify the main child character in each book selected.

iv. Identify the conflict situation facing the child character and those characters with whom they are in conflict.

v. Classify the child character's response to a moral problem according to Kohlberg's stages of moral development.

vi. Chart the growth of moral development in the child character, noting whether it is consistent with Kohlberg's stages.

vii. Determine to what degree the use of the Kohlberg instrument has served to increase the impact of the novel by giving the reader greater insight into character motives and actions.

By becoming aware of the wide range of novels now published for children, teachers will be informed about the types of problems which are dealt with in these books. However, if novels are chosen for class use without having been first read by the teacher, there is a danger of selecting books which are didactic in tone and theme. The literature program might therefore degenerate into counselling sessions which are based on the indoctrination of conventional moral values.

If the teacher wishes to use the Kohlberg instrument in conjunction with the child novel, then the overall objective of his program will probably be to stimulate the moral reasoning of the

students by using works of fiction which pose problems that cannot be solved by the application of conventional moral standards. In his selection of appropriate novels, the teacher should be guided by the level of moral development of the students which can be assessed by means of a Kohlberg test, such as that devised by Porter and Taylor (1972).

The books selected for this study all dealt with the problem of stealing. However, the moral dilemmas which were identified were concerned with conflicts of far deeper significance .involving the child's loyalty to his peer group, his parents or the established code of law and order. Some situations probed the problems of man's individual rights and the much more abstract concept of the dignity of man.

Those teachers who wish to discuss these more difficult concepts with their students are advised to first identify the concrete conflict situations, such as stealing or bullying, in order to challenge the child with recognizable problems. Although the final objective might be the discussion of individual freedom, the short term objective should be to stimulate the child's present level of moral reasoning. As the moral development of the literary character moves upwards and far more complex decisions have to be made, then the long range objective comes into sharper focus. The grouping of the novels around a major problem, such

as stealing, will enable teachers to expose students to varied aspects of the problem through differing literary experiences.

However simple the conflict situation may appear, there are two necessary conditions for thestudent's understanding of the significance of moral problems within the child novel. Both conditions were present within this study during the identification of the moral dilemmas. They are:

i. The literary character must be seen to recognize the existence of a problem, which disturbs his present mode of moral reasoning.

ii. The character must make some form of intellectual response to the moral dilemma.

If these two conditions are absent, the child reader may be confronted with a problem in a story which he fails to recognize. It is the literary character's acknowledgement of the existence of a moral problem which can signal its presence to the reader. Yet the teacher should be aware that he still might have to draw the student's attention to the dilemma, which might pass unrecognized.

Therefore, within the class or individual discussion conducted by the teacher, the full implications of the moral dilemma and the character's response to that dilemma become the focal point of the lesson. The moral reasoning of the literary

character can stimulate questions of comparison involving other decisions made by the character. Furthermore, the moral reasoning of the characters can provide causal questions regarding the reasons why they behaved in such a manner, and it can open up questions of prediction about what they might do in similar or different situations.

The emphasis on characterization in the child novel affords many opportunities for the teacher to introduce role-playing situations into the classroom, especially in the case of books such as A Hero Ain't Nothin' But A Sandwich, in which so many different characters are made responsible for the narrative. Indeed, the different literary styles and unconventional handling of plot and characterization offer the educator a wide variety of methods for presenting the moral problems raised by these novels.

Whatever method is adopted to stimulate interest in these works, the teacher should not lose sight of a very important objective: the encouragement of independent moral reasoning and decision making by the student. The level of independence given to the child characters within the books selected for this study was commendably high. Although parents and other adults were portrayed in all of these books, sometimes with great sensitivity, the emphasis was on the interaction of the

child characters with their immediate social environment, and the manner in which they coped with the moral problems which arose.

Most adolescent readers are at a period in life when they are being asked to face problems far removed from a protecting home environment. Often personal dissatisfaction with parental authority which they find irksome, coupled with a desire to make their own decisions, only increases the many tensions the young people feel. It is suggested that the type of book used in this study would assist the teacher in providing units of instruction which would indirectly assist students to achieve a sense of personal moral autonomy.

There is a possibility that some teachers will balk at using child novels which touch on sensitive issues. Among the four books, A Hero Ain't Nothin' But A Sandwich has quite explicit sexual language and allusions, while The Mimosa Tree appears to condone stealing under certain social conditions. In such cases the use of the Kohlberg instrument can serve to help in the evaluation of controversial literature. The findings of this study have indicated that the authors of the books examined in the content analysis have depicted children thinking about moral problems and making decisions in ways similar to those set forth by Kohlberg, as a result of his empirical studies. This investigation has also shown that when faced with a number of

moral dilemmas, the child characters have moved from a lower level of moral development to a higher one. Although the type of moral problem encountered sometimes elicited unconventional responses from the characters, there did not appear to be a lack of morality in these novels. However, unlike those children's books which seek to reinforce conventional standards of morality, these books emphasize the search by the child characters for a more meaningful code of morality as a basis for making their moral decisions.

The growth of moral development in characterization can assist educators to distinguish between those novels which realistically and sincerely deal with moral problems facing young people and those which tend to gloss over these problems. The best of contemporary adult fiction is very much concerned with moral dilemmas confronting mankind. It is to be hoped that the use of the child novel in the classroom literature program will not only stimulate students to think more deeply about moral problems in general, but will also increase their interest in literature, thus whetting the appetite for those adult works which will continue to challenge their moral reasoning.

Suggestions for Further Research

One of the most critical problems arising out of the study appears to be the child's ability to understand the moral

reasoning of the literary characters. If children are to benefit from these stories they should be at a stage of moral development which enables them to fully appreciate the moral reasoning of the characters both at the beginning and at the end of the story. Further research is needed to ascertain whether child novels, which have been assessed as suitable for a specific age range, do depict moral reasoning at the level of the intended child reader.

Other studies should be carried out to determine whether a literature program which focuses on the moral dilemma does in fact stimulate the moral reasoning of students. Here the researcher should be fully aware of other contributing factors, involving the competency of the author in the handling of literary themes. In studies of this nature attention should be paid to any inconsistencies in the overall moral development of the literary characters.

An important objective of this study was to demonstrate to teachers the educational value of the contemporary child novel. However, the study was only able to deal with the moral reasoning of the main child characters in the books which were analysed. There would appear to be a need for a detailed analysis of one book, such as A Hero Ain't Nothin' But A Sandwich, which would yield information about the moral dilemmas and moral reasoning of all the characters, particularly the adults. This would show

more clearly how the decisions made by one character affected those made by another.

It is also suggested that the major focus of future research in this area should concentrate on the use of the child novel within the regular school literature program. Future studies could attempt to determine whether the type of literature program dicussed in this investigation enabled students to refine their critical abilities in analysing the moral reasoning exhibited by the fictional characters of the child novel.

However, future investigators are cautioned that it is still necessary to establish the validity and reliability of the Kohlberg instrument used within the context of the study of the child novel. Future studies which pursue and enlarge upon this topic should include a panel of judges to verify not only the appropriateness of using Kohlberg's stages of moral development, but also to corroborate the investigator's identification of the moral dilemmas and his interpretation of the moral reasoning of the main characters.

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